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GENERAL OFFICER COMMANDING-IN-CHIEF,  
A.A. COMMAND

# ACK-ACK, BEER-BEER

A Medley from  
The Famous B.B.C. Programme

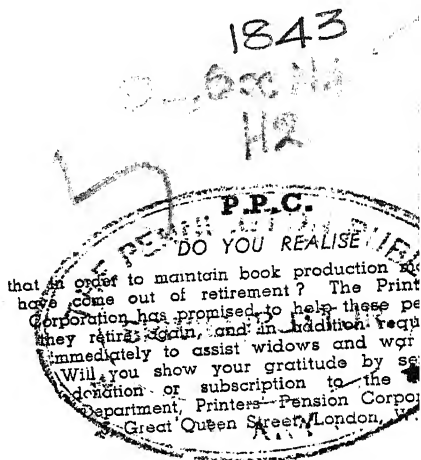
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# FOREWORD

BY

GENERAL SIR F. A. PILE, Bt., K.C.B., D.S.O., M.C.

*General Officer Commanding-in-Chief, A.A. Command.*

ABOUT three years ago, when the public was becoming conscious of the debt it owed to the many soldiers who had to spend their days and nights on out-of-the-way gun or searchlight sites, the B.B.C. offered Anti-Aircraft and Balloon Commands their own programme to be broadcast twice a week. The troops who lived in these remote positions had little or no opportunity of relaxation. There were no cinemas and few concert parties. The wireless was their only medium for amusement. The offer of special broadcasts was therefore much appreciated, and nearly three hundred have now taken place.

Bill MacLurg was nominated by his Director to produce the Ack-Ack, Beer-Beer programme, and a very happy choice it was. He understood the mentality of his listeners; with great energy and enterprise he dug up talent from the most unlikely places, and this book, which contains excerpts from many of the programmes he has produced, is convincing proof of the high quality of the entertainment, both professional and amateur, which he provided. Everyone in Anti-Aircraft Command will wish him and his book all possible success.

F. A. PILE, *General,*  
*General Officer Commanding-in-Chief.*



## FOREWORD

By

AIR MARSHAL SIR LESLIE GOSSAGE, K.  
D.S.O., M.C.

*Air Officer Commanding, Balloon Command, Royal*

I SHOULD like to endorse most heartily General . . . Our conditions in Balloon Command are very similar to Anti-Aircraft Command, our needs for entertainment are identical, and I can assure the B.B.C. that our conditions of the Ack-Ack, Beer-Beer programme, certainly if it does not exceed, that of Anti-Aircraft Command.

I have always regarded it as important that the elements in the defence of the country as Anti-Aircraft Balloon Commands should become as closely acquainted with another as possible. We achieve this officially on an unofficial plane it is not so easy, as restricted travel does not permit our playing games together or meeting at any great extent. Therefore, we welcome the opportunity the Ack-Ack, Beer-Beer programme gives us of enabling the Commands to become better acquainted through to entertain each other "on the air".

Best wishes and thanks, then, to Bill MacLennan, Balloon Command, and all success to him in the Ack-Ack, Beer-Beer programme.

E. L. GOSSAGE, *Air Marshal*  
*Air Officer Commanding, Balloon Command*

## INTRODUCTION

"RED LIGHT ON!"

Every Ack-Ack, Beer-Beer programme begins with the red light going on. It means that the studio is "on the air". So the Ack-Ack, Beer-Beer book begins that way too. The orchestra strikes up the signature tune:

"ON TARGET"



### CHORUS

On Target—Fire!  
Hear the Ack-Ack crack  
As Balloons go rising  
High in the sky,  
Where the clouds are rolling by.  
On Target—Fire!  
And you bet you'll get  
Rid of care and sorrow  
Up in the blue,  
Where the sun is just breaking through.  
Take that frown off  
And don't be browned off,  
Just sing to brighten the road.  
While ballooning  
You'll find that crooning  
Will help to lighten the load.  
On Target—Fire!  
For the fun's begun  
And the blue's are on the run—  
Watch 'em fly.  
When you're On Target—  
On Target—  
On Target in the sky.

## ILLUSTRATIONS

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VERSE BRIVILL

What does Ack-Ack stand for?  
People often say—  
It's the Searchlights and Guns / 187  
Standing ready.  
What does Beer-Beer stand for?—  
Always night or day,  
It's the Barrage Balloons  
Flying steady.  
Add them both together,  
And what do you hear?  
Ack-Ack, Beer-Beer!

BILL MACLURG AND HUGH CHARLES.  
(reprinted by courtesy of the Irwin  
Dash Music Co., Ltd.)

THAT gets the programme and the book well under way and now we turn to the contributors.

Many of these are from the Forces and many are professional entertainers or other well-known people who have come to the microphone to take part in these programmes. You may find our favourite artist here, or as you browse through the pages you may feel that someone has been left out who should be here. But it is pretty certain you will find many things of interest.

The first contributor is a sergeant from a Light Ack-Ack battery.

---

## "THE VOICE OF ACK-ACK"

### *Sergeant Goodhand Talks*

My battery is one of the light batteries that line the coast. It's in a far-away, lost sort of place. Except for ourselves and the rabbits and the ducks there's nothing lives there. We don't get any ordinary visitors either, but we get plenty of company all the same—lots of generals and a concert party every week and men from the heavy anti-aircraft and coast defences—and there's a Jerry, of course. There's hardly a day Jerry misses. In fact

if he does miss, we think there's something up. Jerry comes both day and night.

We have our own method with our searchlights; we hold them until Jerry's quite close and then snap them on so it blinds him, and we get in three or four rounds with the Lewis and Bofors before he has time to do anything. By this method we've spotted as many as eighteen targets a night—some of them three or four 'planes at a time. I myself have seen three brought down at night within the last two or three months. One of these was followed with the lights after we'd hit him and he seemed to be breaking to pieces in the sky as though tracer bullets were coming off him all over his body. One day this month we sank one and crippled another within a quarter of an hour, and the heavier finished off the crippled one.

Something ought to be said about the searchlight men. Our light guns couldn't do anything without them at night, and they're always on the job. One night our lights got a 'plane that was coming from the west and the chaps were holding him till we had him in range. While they were doing that another 'plane came in from the east and dropped a bomb within fifty yards of the light. It didn't half whistle down. But the men on the lights never worried; they held Jerry, because they knew we were waiting for him.

They often drop stuff around us, of course. One night they came after us about fifteen times; but in spite of all that stuff they've dropped they haven't done a bit of damage. In fact they sometimes do us a bit of good. Once when one of their mines came drifting in we popped it off with a Lewis gun. There was a lot of fish about when that went off. We got a conger six foot long, and that kept the Sergeants' Mess going for a whole day. One night they dropped a lot of those Molotov bread-basket things, and some of the little ones went into the sand and didn't go off. When I got in that morning all the rest were asleep. I'd brought one of the little bombs with me and put it in the stove. "That'll sizzle in a bit," I said to myself and by gum it did!—it didn't half shift the chaps out of bed. Sometimes things are a bit quiet. Then, if we need a bit of practice, we shoot the ducks a few hundred yards out at sea. We've bagged about six lately.

When Jerry comes by day he's often too high for us unless he's mine-laying. But one chap did catch us on the hop. It was a dewy sort of a day, pretty thick. He dropped a couple but he was too high; then he went south a bit, dropped another

couple and came back flying very low. We were all waiting, and we were so sure we were going to get him we held our fire till he was too damn' close, and we missed him. Very annoying it was for us with our record.

There's a lot of back-chat between us and the heavies and the Coast Artillery chaps, especially when we tell them that we're the top scorers in our part of the world and fetched down the first 'plane in this area (and got three barrels of beer for doing it, too). They're all very keen. The Coast Artillery chaps will have a pot at anything they see. They believe in shooting first and arguing afterwards. When summer comes they'll be shooting at butterflies!

(April 10th, 1941.)

That was two years ago. Ack-Ack hasn't had quite so many chances for a crack at Jerry lately, but when the chances come, well, Jerry knows all about that!

## COMFORTS FOR THE TROOPS

*by Ronald Frankau*

THE other morning I said to my wife, or whoever it was: "I must do something more for the war—for the boys. I'm thinking of the chaps in the East, the Near East, the Middle East, the Far East . . ."

"East said soonest mended," murmured my wife, or whoever it was. I laughed unmercifully.

"What is it our airmen and soldiers want most?" I went on. She told me.

"I know," I answered, "but I can't do anything about that." And then I remembered my own war in Mesopotamia, and I suddenly exclaimed, "Flies!" She misunderstood me and suggested that that was the last thing the troops wanted, and I explained that that was the point: *they had too many in all the Easts*, and don't the beastly insects not only swarm on one's food and become the biter's blight—but also, out there, the blighters bite. Then I expanded on my plan.

"I will send out thousands of fly-papers—enough for every unit everywhere. They're not expensive. They're not rationed. They will be the ideal comfort!"

Now once I get a fly in my bonnet I'm a perfect bee, and so I buzzed off as soon as I was dressed and went to every vendor of



fly-papers in London. It was October and the close season for flies in Britain, of course, as there was a T in the month. There was, in fact, a slight shortage, though this was not noticeable when the supplies were delivered at the flat. They completely filled the lounge. I started counting them in the same way as one counts pound notes, but without licking the thumb. However, I stuck at number one, and my wife, or whoever it was, had to pull me away with her foot pressed against the rest of the bundle as a lever. Then I had to pull *her* away. This sort of thing went on for an hour. After that, I took it for granted that the number paid for had been delivered. The next thing to do was to arrange for their delivery to the different Easts. I rang up the War Office and the Air Ministry and asked about the number of men in the various places. They wouldn't tell me at first, but when I lied and said that my name was Heisswasser-Spiegler, they at once gave me the information. My wife, or whoever it was, and I wrote out hundreds of labels addressed to the various units and squadrons, and the next thing was to interview the Board of Trade, who were very . . . Very what? Very bored of trade, and sent me to the Shipping Ministry, who were half-seas-over and blankly refused to consider my filling up valuable ship space with what they dared to call frivolous gifts.

I explained my motive—the extermination of a noxious and dangerous insect—and that when the troops got them the flies would be done. The gentleman simply replied that the flies must remain as they were, so I gave him a blimp's bye-bye, which is a very senior soldier's farewell, and returned to my wife, or whoever it was, with misery written all over my cuffs. Together we looked at the stacks of flypapers, which still filled the lounge.

"What can we do with them?" I asked her. She told me. And that's what we did. As an extra anti-blast precaution we stuck them up on every window throughout the whole block of flats.

---

## "THE EXPERT TALKS" "SINBAD"

(*Captain A. E. Dingle*)

IF sailing a square-rigged ship around the world, or making a single-handed voyage of twenty-six days in a small sailboat across

the open Atlantic, calls for expertness then I suppose I am an expert. I've done both of those things.

I've navigated a schooner from Singapore to the Seychelles, to the Crozets, and back to St. Paul's Island, with nothing better in the way of a chronometer than a cheap alarm-clock. Now that might be called a pretty fair bit of windjammer navigation as far as it went—but it didn't go far enough. I've always believed that a real expert ought to be able to navigate without Greenwich Time at all. In fact, before the advent of lunar observations and chronometers, tremendous voyages were completed by navigators who could only make a shot at knowing their latitude by estimating the altitude of the Pole Star. I've made passages myself without a timepiece; but that's a different matter from making one with a timepiece that keeps ragtime.

Trusting to that alarm-clock I reckoned that I was to the eastward of St. Paul's, that is in the Indian Ocean, when I was actually to the westward. I believed there was no land between me and Australia, with plenty of deep ocean in between.

It's no use debating the error now. I left the old clock, and the ship, and all my worldly goods on St. Paul's, sunk off a reef which I found and hit hard in the night.

Even an expert can take an awful toss when he substitutes cocksureness for vigilance.

Sailing a big windjammer demanded skill, courage, and, to make consistently fast passages, luck. There is a quality known as intuition. Oh yes, I know where his intuition has got Hitler, but it isn't always based upon such sketchy knowledge. When a man has sailed, say, to Australia by way of Good Hope and back around Cape Horn, he ought, if he has the makings of a sailor in him, to have noticed one thing: it is not the ship which keeps the straightest course or *appears* to travel fastest over a given period that makes the best passages. It's rather the ship whose master follows his hunch to find the truest winds, and bases his hunch upon keen observation. There are fairly steady winds that may be depended upon to blow in one direction for a great part of the year. The keen sailing-ship master would often leave what might seem to be a good favourable breeze in order to sail apparently far out of his course and let another ship go far ahead of him. But if his hunch was right, and he found the true wind he believed he would find, he could trim his yards and go romping on his voyage and never start tack or sheet for weeks. The other ship might carry her nice breeze for a few days, and go far ahead of her rival, only to run out of wind and

find herself in a region of variables which would torment the souls and tempers of her people beyond human belief.

Of course, intuition sometimes lets the expert down. There was the voyage I made in the lovely little barque *Lady Elise*. After rounding the Horn in summer weather, I got a bit above myself and thought I could beat the book of winds and currents. A sailing ship usually stood well away from the South American coast to escape the great Brazilian current which runs strongly to the southward, but after passing Cape San Roque it was the custom of most ship-masters to head for the Western Isles, the Azores. Now I had known what it was to get caught in that region by baffling winds. I had seen gathered together there as many as forty-seven sailing ships all hoping for a wind.

My intuition drove me to keep to the westward, in the belief that I could cross the belt of light breezes and sooner reach the strong westerlies in the northern track of the favourable Gulf Stream. And my hunch fooled me. I got right into the thick of the Sargasso Sea, and found the weed unusually dense. That indicated a prolonged period of calms in the area.

The indications were right. How right they were! For a month my smart little barque drifted among the golden tangle of weed. I could hear the crew muttering. Some of them believed the gaudy old legends that had grown up around the Sargasso Sea. It made no difference that scores of steamers crossed the thick of the Sargasso Sea every voyage they made to South America and the West Indies and came to no harm. Every man who went on watch expected to sight, sooner or later, a ghostly galleon manned by long dead sailormen. Argument was useless. Old myths die hard among seamen.

And sure enough, one night when the full moon blazed like daylight and the golden weed murmured like spirit voices, my chief mate came down to awaken me and his manner allowed no delay. I got on deck in my bare feet, prepared to give all hands a proper scraping down for their damned foolishness.

The mate had declared a ghost ship was in sight. I could hear the rising clamour of men blaming me for bringing them into destruction. I looked around.

Was it? It couldn't be! Of course there was no such thing. But what about that, right ahead?

There sailed under the moon, touched with ghostly radiance a tall ship with every sail set, and from every part of her emanated a mysterious light. It wasn't moonlight either. I was as mystified as my crew—but I was too cocksure to believe in ghost ships.

I didn't believe it now, although what else that strange apparition could be I hadn't a word for.

I noticed that we had picked up a nice little breeze, we were moving through the water, and I knew that the *Lady Elise* could overhaul most ships in such conditions. As well as I could I silenced the men and kept them busy trimming the yards to get the best out of our ship. And as the moon went down, the breeze strengthened. We drew up upon the ghost ship until, just as the dawn broke, we were near enough to catch a very pungent aroma. We were to windward of the ghost ship, but still could smell that queer aroma—and although the moon had gone there was still an unearthly radiance about that ship.

Then I knew what she was! I called the mate from his bunk, as he had called me from mine.

"There's your ghost!" I said. "Nothing more than an old Antwerp hooker loaded with bones for fertiliser from Monte Video! That's phosphorus you can see. What you smell you can guess. Now get down among the men and tell 'em not to be such damn' fools!"

The breeze increased. The ghost ship faded astern. And after all, my hunch proved right—for we drew out of the weed into the Gulf Stream and found the westerlies so strong that we came to anchor in our home port fifteen days ahead of the ship that sailed with us—and we passed that old bone ship coming up the Channel as we passed out on our next voyage.

She still glowed. She had grown no sweeter.

---

## LAUGHS WITH THE FORCES [I]

I'd like to tell you about a farmer friend of mine. He was driving along in his old car the other day and sitting beside him was his dog. Going up a very steep hill, the farmer was convinced he heard the engine of the car say, "Blimey, this is a stiff climb for an old tub like me!"

Naturally rather surprised and bewildered, the farmer turned to his dog and said, "That's strange, I've never heard my motor talk before."

And the dog replied, "Come to think of it, neither have I!"

SQUADRON-LEADER KENNETH HORNE,

## "LAUGH AND THE WORLD

THE backbone of any light-hearted broadcast must be a comedian. What goes to make a comedian . . . be funny? Those are the questions which must cross the mind of any man or woman who wants to put on a show. This is what that versatile artist Reginald Purdell had to say in an Ack-Ack, Beer-Beer programme.

---

### HOW TO BE A COMEDIAN *by Reginald Purdell*

How can I become a comedian? On numerous occasions I have been asked this very vital question, and there are many fast rules which must be strictly adhered to, if you are to get the reputation of being a "wit", a "wag", a "can-can", a "caution", or that greatest of all pests, "the life and soul of the party".

Of course, if you wish to become a professional comedian—that is a paid buffoon, it is as well to absorb the following. Firstly, on all possible occasions adopt a North-Country accent. For some inexplicable reason a Yorkshire or a Lancashire accent sounds much more comical than a Welsh, a Scotch or a Devonshire one.

You need not be a North Countryman born—just adopt the accent.

It is advisable, having secured an engagement as a comedian, to get into the habit of insulting the conductor. This is easily achieved by making slighting references to the conductor's linen. Sometimes, of course, conductors take exception to this and come back with a smart piece of repartee, thus causing a bit of trouble to the embryo comedian. Indeed, there are many instances when the long-suffering conductors have been obliged to shoot comedians and on these occasions a judge and jury have subsequently exonerated them.

The budding comedian will be well advised to be a little bizarre. In fact a grotesque costume is recommended. For instance, one brown boot and one black boot, an admiral's uniform, and a very small hat will have a most effective effect, and will certainly add to the success of the ven-

If your hair is naturally red or sandy, as in the case of my distinguished colleague, Mr. Leonard Henry, you will have a distinct advantage. If not, it would be as well to purchase a ginger wig, the effect of which will be greatly enhanced by having a loose piece of hair in the centre of the wig, attached to a piece of elastic or string. This string should be cunningly concealed in the sleeve of your jacket, and when pulled should raise the hair from the head, causing peals of merriment.

So much for the professional side of the comedian's art. Now for a few tips on the social angle. When in society it is essential to monopolize the conversation. Develop your ego, so that on all occasions "I" becomes the operative word. Never ease to refer to your overwhelming success the preceding week at the particular hall at which you were appearing, and where you paralysed your audience. Should anybody else in your company have the effrontery to tell a funny story, look right through them and tell the end yourself before the raconteur gets to it.

And now to round off this address, I am going to call on my old friend Charlie Clapham, famous for years as the comic of Clapham and Dwyer, to say a few well chosen words to you.

## CHARLIE CLAPHAM

When I was asked by Mr. MacBurps—Clurg—whatever his name is—to take part in this programme, he requested me—even if he hadn't requested me I should have been in the programme just the same because of the fee—but when he did mention something about Beer-Beer, I thought, "Well, that's grand," and then he said something about Ack-Ack as well. Being a horsey man I thought, "Well, what with the Ack-Ack and the Beer as well it should be a good day for me"—so here I am.

I want to say a few points now on the situation. The trouble is as plain as I can see—it is really, it's all Balkan's trouble from one end to the other and Jamaica is nearer to the West than the Indies. That should explain quite a lot, but before we go into any political arguments I'd like to present the Not So Very Story Hour.

Not So Very Rude Story Number One! . . . I don't know whether you've heard the one about the recruit to the Royal Air Force. He had only been in the Forces a fortnight and disappeared for twelve hours with a machine. When he last he was met by a sergeant, that is a man who has three thing

his how-do-y'-do, and he said to the recruit: "Well, you been?"

The recruit said, "Well, I've done it!"

He said, "Oh, you've done it; and what have you done?"

He said, "Oh, I've done everything—upside down, nose-diving, and the whole thing."

The sergeant said, "Really?"

The recruit said, "Yes," he said, "and I've made a fine record as well."

He said, "Oh. . . in that machine?"

"Yes, in this machine."

He said, "Well, you've got no instruments in your hands."

He said, "Haven't I? Well, where do you get your ruddy harp from?"

Not So Very Rude Story Number Two! . . . He went into a pub and he said, "A pint of beer, please."

The guv'nor said, "Sorry, no glasses."

He tried six pubs and got the same answer at all of them. Finally he found a pub with a pint glass resting on the bar. He grabbed the glass, dashed in and said, "Pint of beer, please."

The guv'nor said, "Is that your glass?"

"Yes," he said eagerly.

"Ah, well," said the guv'nor, "sorry, but you can't have it."

A short story for the children. . . . Once upon a time, two famous billiards players were practising one afternoon with the usual ivory balls, when suddenly a large elephant came in. One player turned to the other and said, "Look round, old man, but an elephant has just come in. We must carry on and take no notice."

The elephant sat down and watched closely the game, his head carefully following the balls from one end of the table to the other. After a while he moved to the edge of the table, still intently watching the game. The two players still went on playing, but they had not seen him. Suddenly the elephant pushed over the three ivories, said, "My brother-in-law," and walked out.

I don't think that's a true story, children.

Reverting to the trouble in the East, I'd heard that things seemed to be—in a bombshell—er—in a rattle—er—in a rattle—a couple of blokes in the Balloon—er—in a rattle—er—in a rattle.

they were in the bar—you know—where you get a large for a very—less than you had in the other—and they both had very red—they'd obviously been doing a steady trade for some long time. In fact they were distinctly you know how, and this was the conversation:

One said, "Well, when they invade us——"

The other bloke said, "Who?"

"The Germans," said the first bloke.

"What do you mean, they invade us?"

"Well, when they invade us——" He hiccupped slightly.

"Don't be silly, they can't invade us. How are they going to get here?"

"Who?" asked the first bloke.

"The Germans. How are they going to get here?"

"By boats."

There was a pause for a moment, and then the other bloke spoke again.

"Oh, boats," he said. "That's different."

## SPORTING RECOLLECTIONS "BEHIND THE WHEEL"

*by Billy Cotton—The Famous Band Leader*

PERHAPS you wonder how a band-leader gets into this book under "Sporting Recollections"? Well, motor-racing is the answer. I started off in the last war in 1914 as a drummer in the Royal Fusiliers and ended up as an officer in the Royal Flying Corps. I was what I'd describe now as a pilot of sorts, and managed to incur the wrath of my Flight Commander once or twice for thinking aeroplanes were made in more than one piece.

I think it must have been during that time that engines got into my blood. I remained keen on flying and had an aeroplane right up to this war. But the bug that really bit me was motor-racing. I spent a lot of time and heart-breaks at that. I suppose I did all right as I won quite a few races and did well enough in a lot of others.

There are lots of stories to be told about motor-racing. Maybe two or three that concerned me would amuse you.

First of all, my most hectic race, if you can call it that.





BILLY COTTON.  
THE FAMOUS BAND LEAD

Whatever you call it, it was a close call for me, because the crankshaft broke, everything went solid, and my speed was under the one-hundred-and-fifty miles per hour mark! It really brought home to me the meaning of the title "The Music Lies Round and Around".

Another time the cars were all lined up and preparing for the "off" for a five hundred mile race. Engines were being revved and the noise was terrific. The mechanic I had was a very excitable foreigner whom I suspected of not having too high an opinion of my driving. So, amongst all the din, he beckoned him to come to the car on the line and shouted in his ear, "What gear do I use to go off with?" The last thing I saw out of the corner of my eye was my mechanic waving his hands with a despondent look on his face and an expression I should imagine consigned me to the madhouse.

One more yarn, one that amuses me, but wasn't very funny at the time. In the start of the race split seconds mean a lot, and one of the old hands told me a way to anticipate the starting flag that was generally dropped by the late Mr. Ebbelwhite. He said that after the one minute warning was shown, by carefully watching "Ebby" one could see him take a deep breath just before he dropped his arm. So the next time I was driving a race that Ebby was starting I kept a very close watch on him during the last minute. What happened?

He coughed and I stalled my engine!

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### "NOBBY"

A Poem Dedicated to all Balloon Operators

*by Squadron-Leader H. Bitschine*

Did you ever bump into Nobby?

A peculiar sort of cuss,

'Bout the 'eight of sixpenn'orth o' coppers,

An' a dial like the back of a 'bus!

'E'd lived all 'is life in a stable,

Since 'e was a nipper o' four;

'E done jest wot 'e liked with them 'orses

An' they'd come up and arsk 'im for more.

When war starts, R.A.F. wants Mechanics,  
 And Pilots and Air Gunners too.  
 Nobby tells 'em 'e's 'andy wiv 'orses  
 Can't they find summat for 'im to do?

They jest larfs at 'im—"We ain't got 'orses—  
 You'll be tellin' us next that yer croons.  
 But we 'ave got a job wot'll suit yer"—  
 And they bungs 'im in barrage balloons!

Ole Nobby's as pleased as a puppy,  
 'E's determined ter climb ter the top,  
 But 'e finds 'e's ter start dahn the bottom—  
 A.C.2 under training Balloon Op.

But at last the day comes when our Nobby  
 'As finished 'is last blinkin' course,  
 And 'e finds 'isself aht on a war site  
 Wiv a balloon ter mind, 'stead of an 'orse!

One night when there wasn't no warning,  
 Ole Jerry comes over ter blitz;  
 There was dirt dropping all round the 'ouses  
 A-settin' the kids orf in fits.

The crew runs ter get the balloon up  
 Wiv Nobby up there on the winch—  
 There's a flash an' a roarin' explosion—  
 The fellows see pore Nobby flinch.

'E'd bin 'it, but 'e just slings 'is brake orf,  
 A-grittin' 'is teeth wiv the pain;  
 'E's all aht to get that balloon up—  
 "Come on, 'oss, gently now, on the rein."

It seems jest like years ter pore Nobby  
 Afore she gets up ter the top,  
 But at long last she reaches the ceiling;  
 Nobby chuckles, an' goes over—flop!

The fellers all rushes towards 'im,  
 Lifts 'im gently out onter the ground;  
 'E knows that 'e's 'andin' 'is checks in  
 But 'e smiles as 'e gazes around.

"So long, mates, yer flat-footed blighters—  
 I'm done for—this pain in me side—  
 But I'd like to 'ave taken a Jerry  
 Ter come wiv me on me last ride."

Then all of a sudden they 'ears it—  
 A-tearin', a splinterin' sound—  
 A Jerry smack inter the cable—  
 And smack again inter the ground.

Ole Nobby jest grins when 'e 'ears it,  
 An' whispers, "We shan't be long, mates,  
 The Jerry's an' me goin' tandem  
 On a long ride ter them pearly gates."

An' so 'e passed out on the ground there,  
 A Balloonatic jist doin' 'is job;  
 "Nature's gentleman" 'is C.O. called 'im,  
 And gum, 'e was right, swelp me bob!

So if they starts pullin' yer leg, chums,  
 An' saying yer all crazy loons,  
 Don't you worry—yer 'elpin' beat 'Itler  
 Wiv yer blanketty barrage balloons.

## LAUGHS WITH THE FORCES [2]

Two tough gunners were entertaining each other telling stories,  
 One said to the other, "Have you heard the story about the  
 bunny rabbit who wanted to go and play?"

The other gunner said, "No, what is it?"  
 So the first gunner said: "Well, once upon a time there was  
 a little bunny rabbit, and it said to its Mummy: 'Mummy, may  
 I go and play?' And the Mummy rabbit said: 'Yes, but be-  
 cause you don't go and play on the railway line.' So the little  
 bit went off, and being a naughty little rabbit, of course it  
 did it and played on the railway line.

"Well now, as it was playing, a train coming along very fast  
 the up-line cut off the little rabbit's white fluffy tail. So it  
 came back to its Mummy and it said: 'Mummy, I've been a

naughty little rabbit. I have been playing on the railway and the train cut off my little fluffy tail!" So the Mummy said: "You *are* a naughty little rabbit. Now go right back to the railway line and find your tail and I'll stick it on for you." So the little rabbit went back and started looking round for its little fluffy tail, and another train coming very fast on the line cut off its little head."

The gunner who was telling the story paused rather and the other fellow said, "What happened after that?"

The gunner who was telling the story said, "Oh, that's that's the end."

So the other one said, "Surely you're not going to leave that thing there?"

The one who was telling the story said, "Well, actually it is a moral."

"Oh," said the other one. "What is it?"

And the one who was telling the story said, "Never lose your head over a bit of fluff."

CAPTAIN JIMMY KENNEDY.

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## MY HOBBY

by Harry Hemsley

HARRY HEMSLEY is an entertainer who delights us with his sayings and doings of his imaginary family of children: Elsie, Winnie, Johnnie and Horace. Horace, of course, is the one who talks that weird unintelligible child jargon, which Harry Hemsley represents in script by sentences such as "Hgfob jmk mn hg fggh fidsawc gfv bghn"—a horror to typists until they realize the letters don't matter! I asked Harry one day if he had a hobby. Here's what he said:

"Most of us have hobbies. Some people make a hobby of collecting stamps, others pewter, or old china—mine is collecting the funny sayings of children. Here are a few of them:

"I met a little girl not very long ago. She was not more than seven. 'Hello, little girl,' I said, 'what might your name be?' 'My name is Pam,' she replied.

"Then, noticing a little gold ring on her finger, I smilingly remarked: 'That's a pretty little ring you're wearing—you're not married by any chance?'"

"The child regarded me with a look of intense scorn, at my apparent ignorance and answered, 'Married! Why, I'm not even engaged!'

"All little boys object to being kissed. To over-ride this objection Harold's aunt sought to bribe him by offering him a penny if he allowed her to kiss him. This was his reply: 'A penny! Coo, why, I get more than that for taking castor oil.'

"A little girl was asked what an egg was. She replied, 'A chicken not yet.'

"A farmer found a small boy perched on the top of his favourite apple-tree. 'What be thee adoin' up that there tree?' he required.

"The boy, answering, said: 'Nothing, mister. I've just fallen off an aeroplane.'

"A little girl was given instruction before paying a visit to some friends—should she be asked to dine to reply, 'No, thanks, I've dined.'

"Unfortunately the question was put to her in this manner: 'Will you have a bite to eat with us?'

"Whereupon she replied, 'No, thank you, I have bitten.'

"Picking up a history book I remarked to its owner, a very small boy: 'How far have you got up to?'

"He answered, 'Up to where my dirty fingers leave off.'

"Elsie was instructed to assist Winnie in her toilet, both children being in the bathroom. A little later weird noises were heard in which Winnie's voice predominated.

"'What ever is the matter in there?' I enquired.

"Answering me, Winnie called out: 'Elsie's dropped the towel in the water, and she's drying me wetter than I was before.'

"'Have you seen your new baby cousin that the stork brought our auntie last week?' I asked Winnie yesterday.

"She replied, 'Oh yes, she's a dear little thing, isn't she?'

"'Has Horace seen her?'

"'No, Horace hasn't seen her.'

"'Would he like to?'

"'I don't know. I'll ask him. Horace, would you like to see the dear little baby that the stork brought Auntie last week?'

"'Glo ash ashey shee shee shors.'

"'What did Horace say?'

"'He said, No, he'd rather see the stork.'

"A teacher addressed her class in this manner: 'Now, then, take out your drawing-books and draw what you expect to be when you grow up. If you'd like to be an ai-

well, draw a picture of an airman. If you'd like to well, draw a soldier. Or draw a sailor, a grocer, or or anything you would like to be.'

"The classroom was quiet for a long time whilst were all busily engaged drawing what they fancied one little boy.

"What's the matter with you?" said his teacher, "haven't drawn a thing. Don't you want to be any

"Yes, I do, teacher," he replied, 'I want to be a pilot. I don't know how to draw it!'

"Little Willie's mother had just presented him with two sisters, and the whole household was joyful and excited and was beaming with pride.

"As Willie was about to set off for school, he called his mother aside. 'If you tell your teacher about it, I'm sure she'll give me a day's holiday,' he said.

"That evening Willie came home beaming. 'I'm quite right, Dad, I don't have to go to school tomorrow.'

"Did you tell the teacher about the twins?"

"Oh no, I just told the teacher I had a little brother."

"You should have told her you had two of them."

"No, I'm saving the other for next week."

"You see," said Harry Hemsley, "it is an interesting story and it has one great advantage—it doesn't cost anything."

## THE SPORTS QUIZ

A POPULAR feature of Ack-Ack, Beer-Beer some time ago was a Sports Quiz presented by Harold Lewis, the well-known writer and journalist, under the name of "Captain Cuttle." Here's a story, a fairly true story, from Harold Lewis

### CAPTAIN CUTTLE'S LAST PITCH *by Captain Cuttle*

*by Captain Cuttle,*

*If you know so bleeding much about Sport, why are you coming and back all the winners yours truly Chelsea f.c. supporters.*

That's a letter I received shortly after starting a series of broadcasts in Ack-Ack, Beer-Beer, and I have no need to add that it did not come from a gunner, nor from a lady of the Balloon-arrage, but from some coarse civilian listening to the Forces' programme. It annoyed me. After all, how does he know that I don't back all the winners? For all he knows, I may have been backing every winner for twenty years and now have so much money that I have to keep it in a lot of different banking accounts. I may have been doing all this broadcasting, not for the money but because I felt benevolent and wished others to share my unique knowledge of the rules and history of sport.

Haven't you often read advertisements by people quite willing to give you their invaluable inside information about racing merely for a few odd shillings to cover the cost of the bar expenses? Haven't you seen advertisements about all sorts of ways of getting rich and famous, like writing articles for the newspapers or selling Christmas cards, for instance? Only the other day a fellow wrote giving me priceless advice about some mining shares which were so rare that an expert I showed the letter to had never even heard of them before. Why, I remember a chap who was the strongest man in the world once offering me his secrets so that I, then a boy of thirteen, could have taken his place as the strongest man in the world, just by doing a few simple lessons. He even told me all about the first lesson for nothing. If I had had six shillings and sixpence I would have been the strongest man in the world for a good many years, and that's something you can make money out of, besides enjoying it by busting up people you don't like.

What hurt about this letter from the Chelsea F.C. supporter was that Bill MacLurg had read it first and had written across "This is a nasty one". I felt that this was implied criticism. Bill MacLurg, my own producer, was himself adding suspicion to my knowledge of my subject.



the right answer and came to the conclusion that they as clever as I was and could do my stuff just as well as only I knew someone at the B.B.C. and they didn't. They went on listening and saying it was tripe and went ing. Henry Hall tipped me off about that. "If I ask five questions," he once told me, "I make certain answer four, and I make the fifth just a bit easier, why he's famous. Psychology it's called, if you can. I didn't tell this to Bill MacLurg, because I was daft to him as well. They had to be extremely simple quizzes to guess 'em, and if he knew the answer he'd suspect it was wrong, and as often as not he'd say he didn't know, and shouldn't be caught and look an ass. As though it made any difference. (I'm not in his programme now, so I don't care about Bill MacLurg?)

Well, all was going well and lots of people really liked me. I was clever and knew all the answers to everything (which I do, mind you; don't make any mistake about that) when one day I asked the listeners my favourite darts quiz and I thought to myself that here was one that every listener would guess after about five seconds, even including Bill MacLurg. Well, perhaps not five seconds for Bill MacLurg. He probably phoned me next morning, his voice oozing with confidence and the lustful pleasure of pride, and he would say, "By the way, that was a damn' silly one you asked yesterday. Of course I knew it right away." And I would answer, "That so-and-so?" giving the answer to make sure, and he would say, very pleasantly, "I think I'd make it just a little harder next time, old man."

You remember the poser, don't you? Well, you remember it, don't you? It doesn't matter. The only point that I made was the rule that the last dart must score a double (such as twenty equals forty, or double one equals two) and the double must reduce your score to exactly nil. Well, the Quiz:

A player needs to score three points.

He has three darts.

He scores with each dart and wins the game with 101.

How?

Yes, I know it's soppy. You've guessed it almost before I had finished asking it. But that night dear old Bill was a bit slow. After the show he said, "Was that a bit daft?" I mean, it sounds daft to me. He wants the

has three darts, he scores with each dart, finishes on the double and wins the game. Is that really all right?"

"Yes," I said, "it's really all right." Maybe I was preening myself a wee bit about having beaten him. You get that way when you're a public idol.

Bill said, "He finished on a double, and that must be at least 50 points out of the three he wants. Yet he scores with both other darts." He looked at me a trifle menacingly. There was that in his eye which said pretty plainly that if ever I did slip there would be such an almighty row.

The next day the managing director of some manufacturing company rang up the B.B.C. and complained that his factory was at a standstill because the men were working up to a free-all fight over something about a darts broadcast the previous night. The following day came the avalanche of letters, practically all abusive.

*My sir or madam,*

*Having been President of the Fox and Hounds Darts for two years now I write to say on behalf of all my fellow members that this is a swindle and a robbery and that it can't be done. I am, sir, your obedient servant. P.S. You'd better give some answer next Thursday because there's forty quarts of beer on it at the Fox.*

That sort of thing.

There were one or two telegrams. Lots of telephone calls. Lots of letters. Bill MacLurg got anxious. "This really is all right, this darts thing?" he asked me several times. He added that in a way his job was at stake as well as mine. Of course it was all right, I assured him. I, Captain Cuttle, had never put a foot wrong.

So the following Thursday I gave the answer triumphantly. MacLurg looked a bit puzzled. Off the air, he pinned me to a corner. "Tell me that answer again," he hissed. So I told him—just like you guessed it two minutes ago. Perfectly fine, isn't it? No catch? Certainly not. But poor old Bill went red, with white and purple markings. "Get out of my studio!" he said. "Go on—get out! And never mutter to my microphone again. You—you double-crosser. You double-crosser."

Was that fair? I ask you, Mr. Reader, as an honest judge of sporting quiz, to say whether the answer was unfair.

*What? Oh, come.*

## CAPTAIN CUTTLE'S SPORTS QUIZ

HERE are some of the teasing questions\* on rules of sports which Captain Cuttle set his listeners in Ack-Ack, Beer-Beer, and which members of the Forces set him:

1. *Association Football*: The goalkeeper ran out to gather the ball from a very long shot, but the bounce deceived him, and he slipped and fell. The ball was travelling into the net when a small boy dashed on to the field and kicked it away. Was it a goal? Or, what happened next?

2. *Golf*: A player chipped his ball on to the green. A jackdaw seized it. The golfer shouted and the bird dropped the ball into the hole. Had the golfer holed out?

3. *Cricket*: The ball struck the batsman's pad, was fielded and returned to the bowler. The umpire called, "Over!" The bowler then appealed for leg-before-wicket. Should the umpire give a decision?

4. *Association Football*: A player was taking a penalty kick. He ran up to the ball, pretended to aim for one corner, and deliberately missed the ball. The goalkeeper dived to one side, and then the kicker kicked the ball neatly into the other corner of the goal. Does the referee give a goal?

5. *Cricket*: A bowler, in delivering the ball, accidentally kicks a stump at his end and breaks the wicket. Is this a no-ball? Does the delivery count at all?

6. *Golf*: Two opponents in a match reach the green, having been widely separated by wild tee-shots. The first player says, "I've played five. How many have you played?" "Four," says the second player. They hole out, and then the first player says, "I'm sorry. I had played only four shots to the green, so we are both down in six, and we halve the hole." Do they?

7. *Billiards*: The red stood on the brink of the pocket. The striker played for a six-shot—to pot and follow through. But as he struck his ball the red fell in of its own accord, and the cue ball went in without touching any ball. Who scored what?

8. *Snooker*: A player had made a break of 48 (six reds and six blacks) and potted another red, to bring the break so far to 49 when his opponent noticed that the blue wasn't on the table at all, and apparently never had been since the game started. So he claimed a foul. Who scored what?

\* For answers, see Appendix, p. 177

## “WORDS, IDLE WORDS” or THE THOUGHTS OF AN AIRCRAFTMAN”

DON'T know whether it's ever occurred to you that we A.C.s and N.C.O.s are very limited in our vocabulary. For instance, I went round to the cookhouse the other day, and there was a M.T. carrying on like this:

“I'm sittin' in the binding hanger, not doing any binding or any binding harm when up comes a binding Corporal and binding well says: 'What the binding blue binding blazes do you binding well think you're doing? Get binding up and binding ill get on with your binding work.' I just binding well looked at him and I said to myself, 'I know what you binding are. You're a binding *bind*.' ”

Well, that's all very well, but the English language is full ofjectives; it can be beautiful and expressive. Take, for example, the exquisite English of Pilot-Officer Plum on the telephone:

“Is that you, darling? . . . Oh, good show! . . . Oh, good show! . . . Oh, *jolly* good show! . . . Oh, that's wizard! . . . That really is wizard! . . . I take a good view of that, I take an exceptionally good view of that . . . Well, no—actually! . . . Well, yes—actually! . . . Oh no—*actually*? . . . Well, I take a very poor view of that . . . I take a very poor view of that . . . What? . . . Yes, we went to the show, but Diana wouldn't come, and it was rather a good show, so it was rather a good show . . . Not, it wasn't a bad *show*, it was *good* show, but I mean it was a bad show because—I mean it was a good show, but . . . Hullo? . . . Hullo? . . . You've cut me off. Well, it's a bad show. It really is a bad show. I take a poor view of it. I really do take a poor view of that. I couldn't take a poorer view of that. . . .”

Yes, there's no doubt that the language used by the A.C.s and N.C.O.s could benefit by such an example.

ARTHUR MACRAE.  
(late L.A.C., now Flying Officer.)

## "NATURE'S NIGHT FIGHTERS"

*by Frank Lane*

WE hear a good deal about the R.A.F.'s night fighters, what about the first night fighters of all—the owls and

I guess the great swathes of light which the searchlights now for ever cutting in the night sky are puzzling our owl bats quite a lot. Not so much, though, I imagine, as German relatives are being puzzled by the firework display up by the Jerry multi-coloured searchlights. I'd like to know just how an owl reacts when it flies in a split-second from blackness into more than noonday light. I think its eyes do a pretty quick-change act. Those eyes of an owl are remarkable organs. Some experiments have been carried out with species of owl and they proved that the bird had complete control over the movements of the iris. The owl was seen instantaneously to contract or relax the quivering iris in accommodation to vision to different objects and varying distances. Moreover, it was proved that the owl could move the two irises independently of each other.

In addition to its marvellous eyes (for the bird can see in pitch darkness) an owl has another aid to night hunting—its microphonic ears, whose enormous auditory cavities encircle the face. Incidentally, that helps to explain why an owl has such a relatively huge face. Such a sensitive hearing apparatus enables an owl to pick up minute sounds made by its quarry which would be completely inaudible to less efficient ears.

And that brings me to the third characteristic of this nocturnal night fighter. An owl on the wing is the most silent bird there is—that is except when it gives vent to its ear-piercing scream which is probably to make its quarry start and thus give it position away. The owl's silent flight fulfils two purposes—it enables the bird to hear other sounds better and it prevents the creatures it is after hearing the owl's approach. Nature has given the owl a special silencer equipment in the shape of very fine down which covers the tail and the edges of each wing. This down, coupled with a special formation of the flight feathers, makes the beating wings of an owl practically noiseless.

For armament, an owl has a pair of very deadly claws and an efficient beak. A man who had the misfortune to be attacked by owls said one owl's claw went right through the sinew of

and entirely paralysed it. And you may remember reading a while ago that Mr. Eric Hosking, the famous bird photographer, lost an eye through an attack by this most efficient of all night fighters.

So much for the owl. What about the bat? If a bat were enlarged up to the size of a 'plane, and by some miracle it could be made to retain its manoeuvrability, I doubt if there's a searchlight crew in existence that could keep it in the beam. And if I've ever watched a bat performing its eerie erratic flight at dusk you'll know why. It flings its tiny body about the sky like living quicksilver. Now there's a reason for that. Most bats live largely on insects and to capture their prey they have to dodge and dart about like a Spitfire manoeuvring round a corner for the kill—only more so! Maybe when we see them at dusk they are "revving up" to get ready for the night's work. And now I'm going to say something about bats that may well make you smile. They carry with them their own radio-locators. I'll tell you what I mean.

Have you noticed what large ears bats have? And if ever you get close to one you may notice that the little creature has the conspicuous growths of one sort or another on its head. For example, one species has a thick, wide, horseshoe-shaped membrane covering its muzzle and others have a series of small, rounded warts on the lips or small wattles on the sides of the head. All these seem to act as sound receivers or microphones. When a bat flies it emits a series of very high-pitched cries. The sound-waves thus set up radiate from the flying bat, and if they strike an object come bounding back to the little creature. These sounds are then picked up by its "microphones" and a message is flashed to its wings, and by the time it has come level with the obstacle it has altered the direction of its flight and thus it does not come to grief. You see what I mean now, by saying that bats have their own radio-locators?

And just in case you think I have pulled the "long bow", here is a quotation, taken from a report of the experiments of American scientists on bats. This is what the report says: "Some of the newest aviation instruments are believed to use a device similar to the one developed so effectively by nature in the bat. It is expected that the knowledge gained at Harvard" where the experiments were carried out—F.W.L.) "from the study may have useful applications in the air armament programme."

So I hope when next you get a glimpse of either an owl or

bat you will realize that you are looking at a night flyer which is not unworthy of comparison with the finest night fighter turned out by the R.A.F.

## "MY HOBBY IS BEER"

SOMEBODY must have been the first person to say this, and since that first statement, how many thousands, no, millions of times has it been said? What the speaker usually means is that he likes to spend his spare time in the warm and congenial atmosphere of his local inn, talking to his cronies and having a game of darts or skittles or shove-halfpenny. In fact, spending it. Englishmen have spent it from generation to generation. Let us see what someone who knows a lot about inns and beer and back has to say:

## "BEER AND BACCY"

*by Gerald Face*

I SUPPOSE I ought to know something about these two things—beer and baccy, because during the day I work for a famous tobacco firm, and in the evenings I'm behind the bar in my wife's pub, The Jolly Sailor Inn. So here goes.

I wonder if the average chap sitting in his local pub enjoying his pint of beer and a pipe of mellow tobacco ever gives a thought to the amount of care and organization needed to bring him these two simple pleasures of life.

First of all, the average man demands certain qualities in his beer, and if he doesn't get them, well, there's trouble. I think it has been established that beer was a beverage of some importance in the time of the Pharaohs of Egypt. But I'm sure that the beer of the last century, to say nothing of five thousand years ago, would meet with a cold reception if placed on the bar counter nowadays.

Today the first thing a man wants in beer is stuff he can swallow—no cloudy stuff for him. But our forefathers considered strength, or possibly effect, before appearance.

Take the famous "Brown October Ale" so much sung about a hundred years ago. This was certainly a fearsome concoction from the point of view of strength, but if the innkeeper of today

duced this brew there would be some very caustic comments for the counter about "Pea Soup" or perhaps "Here's real mud for your eye"!

But for all this, beer nowadays is pretty good stuff. And I don't believe those stories you hear about modern beer being full of chemicals". Any brewer of repute knows that to produce a beer which will suit the present-day customer, it must be brewed on malt, hops and sugar alone.

Whilst on the topic of beer, I think we ought to say a word about that hearty set of men, the brewery draymen. They are men on their own, always cheerful, ever ready for a pint, and as strong as lions. Our delivery day is Friday, and after the kegs have been put in the cellar and the barrels racked, the crew of three are entertained in the bar—whatever time of day they happen to be open to call. This is a time-honoured custom which must be observed.

One of these chaps was telling me that one day when they were out on a very busy round, they started on a forty-mile journey in a lorry, two men in the cabin of the lorry and George on the tail-board, feeling very sleepy. When they reached the brewery, they found they were short of George. He had fallen asleep and slipped off the lorry and was in hospital forty miles away! Our friend also told me that during the floods last winter they came to a dip in the road which was completely under water. He asked a rustic standing near by if it was safe to take the lorry through, and was told, yes. However, when the water was above the top of the wheels he shouted to the said rustic:

"I say! You said this water wasn't deep!"

"Well, sir," said the rustic, "it be only 'aff way up our ducks!"

And now a word about our smokes. It is not so long ago as we used to rely on our American friends for our supply of pipe tobacco. But now we get a good deal from the Dominions and Colonies and elsewhere too. It comes over here in great wooden hogsheads weighing about half a ton. Then it is usually allowed to mature for about three years in a bonded warehouse before it's used.

Pipe tobacco has been smoked in this country since the sixteenth century, but cigarettes are of much later origin. The idea of wrapping tobacco in paper and smoking it in this form is said to have been brought back by the soldiers who served in the Boer Campaign of 1893-6. But cigarettes became increasingly popular. That's very obvious today, and it's certain that more tobacco is used in this form than as pipe tobacco.



Beer and tobacco, deliciously simple pleasures, to make that wonderful tradition of English life Inn. As I told you, that's something I know about. A wife keeps one down in Somerset. It might amuse some of the hidden snares which beset the path of the innkeeper. Here are a few examples from the "tomers" list:

The man who puts a vice-like grip on his closing time and insists on being the last to leave.

The man who wants to sell you life insurance on the counter.

The chatty man who *will* talk when you are trying to get on from the till.

The man who insists on singing or the man who insists on fight—the vocalist is more nuisance than the man in the long run.

The busybody who wants to come round with his glasses.

The man who says, "Hello, the tide's out" when the bar is not quite full and the bar is over full.

However, these queer fish are in the minority, and the chap with his glass and his pipe is usually a really good fellow.

I'll tell you another thing. If you're feeling a bit down, you would revive your faith in human nature to know of the acts of kindness which are done unobtrusively by the chap who spends an hour in a tavern during the evening. And the chap who is broke till next pay day seldom goes to the bar.

Dr. Johnson, that rather irritable old gentleman nearly two hundred years ago, once said:

"There is nothing which has yet been contrived which so much happiness is produced as by a good inn!"

Long may it continue to flourish as an English institution.

## COUNTRY LIFE

by Hedley Beadle

ALTHOUGH I am a man of the city, I was brought up on the land and farming and the countryside have remained my chief occupation, interest and hobby.

My father never could understand how I tolerated the monotony of London. Nothing ever happened there, he used to say, while on the farm everything is always happening. There is life in this. Nature never is still. The crops, the trees, the flowers and everything, are always changing. But in the town it is pretty much the same year in and year out.

Contrast the noises on a farm with those in the city. The neighing of a horse, the bleating of a lamb, or the grunt of a pig, far above all the song of the birds—how much more pleasing than the din of the city.

I love, too, to hear the horse language of the labourer: 'Oo-ach! Woo, Woo, Gee now, Smart. Gidup. Gipsy. ady. Smart."

And dialects too! In Essex you might hear some such conversation as this:

"Where you goon, George?"

"Up the medder to give they lil ode lambs some vittels."

"Where you goon arter that?"

"To see how the ode bulliks are gittin' on up t'other end of farm."

"Are ye, whaver for? They are all right, I count."

"Howsoever, I count I'll goo and see for mesen."

"How much d'yar ode sow make at the market, George?"

"Not so much as I thought t'ood, tho I dent think t'ood!"

I hope the dialects will never die out. If they do, there won't be an England, because, to my mind, they are England.

## CIDER

*by R. J. Wear*

ALL chaps, beer's all right, but give me cider every time. I drink a pint of good Somerset cider, a crust of bread and some red-dar cheese is the best meal a man can have. I have been drinking cider for about fifty years. I run a big mixed farm and take cider as a side line. I grow my own fruit, about ten acres of apples, mostly Kingston Blacks. These are the best cider apples.

Maybe you'd like to know how we make cider? Well, we gather the apples and let them stand in a heap to mature for

about a fortnight. Then they go into an old machine. It's got wooden cogs, made from the apple tree. This pulps up the apples. Then they put it out into the tubs. This is pure fruit juice, anything but pure juice in our cider. A good drink after water. From the tub we put it into barrels, or pipes, as they're called. It stands three weeks, and then we rack it off into other

It's about three months before we can sell it, like that for years. I've drunk five-year-old beautiful, but it was very strong. You tell a good smell and its taste. It's a matter of experience, smell and taste of apple.

We use the waste from cider-making as pig cattle. I remember once emptying the sediment into a pigs' trough and they ate too much of it. Those pigs were all tight!

There is more cider drunk in Somerset now than I think. It's a good drink and it holds its own way. Cider-making doesn't take up much of my job for the spare men in their spare time. We gather when it's dry and make the cider when it's wet.

Yes, beer's all right, but give me cider every

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Jeanne de Casalis presents :  
 "MRS. FEATHER ON THE TELEPHONE"

"HALLO? . . . Is that Stickler, Stamp and Nootors? . . . Can I speak to Mr. Stickler, please? . . . I speak to Mr. Stamp? . . . Oh, all right, give me But don't be long because I want him to sue so and . . . Hallo, Noodle? . . . er . . . Mr. . . . er This is Mrs. Feather speaking! . . . You were a Oh, look here, I regret to say I'm in a very delicate Can you hear me? . . . I sound muffled? I am. laid up. I'm laid up downwards. Yes, I've had . . . a how-d'you with a horse! . . . Well, you see Riding Sergeant put me on it and it shook me off. balloon going up! . . . I say I've had a hull-of-a

loo. With a horse! . . . Yes! . . . A very rough sergeant put me on a horse that was in the same paddock as a balloon and when the balloon went upwards the horse stepped forwards and I fell downwards on my backwards! Now I'm upside down and . . . well . . . you see my position! . . . Wish you could? . . . The sergeant said I had such a nice seat, too. But of course this has ruined it! . . . Well, now, the point is: Who could we sue, Noodle? . . . I say, Sue should we Hoo Noodle! mean for my damages? The horse, the sergeant, or the balloon? . . . Why not? Doesn't someone represent a balloon in Parliament? . . . Well, can't the horse hire a solicitor to defend him from me? . . . All right, then, I'm going for the sergeant . . . Going for the sergeant. After all, he should have known better—he was in a very posh regiment too! Yes . . . the Coldercream Guards. Er . . . Goldstream Guards. This horse should be trained not to move when someone's lying on its back! . . . What! . . . That's all very well, Noodle, but I'm not going to take a thing like this sitting down! I shouldn't be surprised if I could never sit down again. I . . . Yes, but that's not all. Wait a minute, that's only the beginning! He was very careless placing me on the animal! . . . Well, you see, I said there were three ways of getting on. . . . Take a flying leap on to it—like in circuses—or putting your knee in his hand and being thrown up, or just stepping into the saddle from a table or a high wall, which is what I wanted to do . . . Yes, but he wouldn't let me! . . . No! . . . He insisted on flinging me on! Being a feather-weight naturally I fling very easily! . . . Who flung who? . . . He flung me! . . . Believe it or not, he threw me from the ground on one side of the animal to the ground on the other side five times before I hit the target! . . . I said to him: 'What d'you take me for? A Cuttleshock . . . a shucklecot . . . a coshle . . .' I was at the end of my tether by the time I got there—and so was the horse! . . . Yes. till, I was pleased because I'd mastered the most difficult part and . . . What? . . . Oh yes, getting on and off is the difficulty . . . the rest is nothing . . . it's just a matter of hooking our legs under its tummy and hanging on to the ridge of fur down its neck . . . which is what I was doing . . . but he said I must sit up and tickle the horse with my toes! Well, now, I knew that was a mistake at the time—I felt it in my bones—I still feel it in my bones. I said to him: 'Look here,' I said, 'I'm quite happy lying down like this with my arms round its neck—won't let's move—we can put the finishing touches in afterwards.'

But he said: 'No, we're going to take a nice little walk on the balloon now.' And of course that's the very moment it started to float up! . . . No, not the horse—the balloon . . . Up till then it was lying squeezed out on the grass. No, no, Noodle, not the horse . . . Up till then I really hadn't noticed it . . . I thought it was a carpet or something. Yes . . . But all the time it was inhaling and getting bigger and bigger . . . the balloon . . . Yes! Well, then, it went . . . and the horse . . . and me! Of course, before I could say 'Jack Hulbertson' I was back on the land. . . . I beg your pardon? . . . You don't think I've got a leg to stand on? . . . I haven't. That's the point! And I haven't got anything to sit on either! !! And someone has got to pay for it! Well, look here, let me put my case to Mr. Stickler! . . . He's sitting on a Board? What about Stamp? . . . Standing for Payment? Oh dear, and you always take everything lying down. Well, who should I tell about it to, then? . . . Tell it to the Horse Marines? Who are the Horse . . . Who are the Noodles? . . . Hallo! . . . Macaroni . . . er . . . Poodle, . . . er . . . Noodle! Oh dear, I haven't got the strength to go on with this . . . Edgar! Darling! Bring me a long drink and a cushion, dear! . . . A long cushion and a soft drink . . . soft . . . a hard . . . a . . . Don't argue, dear, dear, dear, ARGUE. . . ."

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## "THE EXPERT TALKS"

*by Sir Adrian Boult, the famous Conductor of the  
B.B.C. Orchestra*

I'm quite sure I'm the last person who ought to be talking about conductors. I've been asked to tell you what a conductor is supposed to be there for, and I don't see how to do this without a good deal of blowing my own trumpet. At any rate, I'll tell you what I *try* to do, but really it is for the listeners to decide whether they think the man who wags the stick really does anything, or whether he's just showing off.

Well, what do we conductors think we do, anyway? I believe it is our job to think very hard about the music we have to perform. So hard that we come to have a very clear picture



SIR ADRIAN BOULT.  
CONDUCTOR OF THE B.B.C. ORCHESTRA

in our minds of exactly the way that music has to go: loud, fast and agitated, or slow and peaceful. Yes, but how does it affect the orchestra or the choir we are conducting? Partly, of course, because we tell them what to do at rehearsal; partly because we try to wave our stick and our arms in such a way that it will make them play or sing just as we want them to; partly also by a kind of control—telepathy, if you like to call it that. You know that if you're sitting at a play, or a picture in a church—or out for a walk with someone you're fond of—you can sometimes be sure that you know what they're thinking before they say anything about it? That is the same sort of thing that affects musicians who are being conducted; and I have sometimes heard the same orchestra at the same concert sound entirely different when a second conductor comes along.

So that is the main part of a conductor's job, and I suppose it all sounds very easy. But actually there is a bit more to it than that, for besides thinking very hard beforehand about each piece he has got to play, the conductor must have a lot of knowledge, and an experienced orchestral player will tell in a few minutes' rehearsal whether the man in front of him knows his job or does not. Here are some of the things he must know. He should have a good idea not only of the tune and main lines of a piece, but of everything that everyone is contributing to the total effect. He should be able to suggest ways of playing passages to everyone—which means that he should know how to play every instrument in the band. Then again, he should know that the music that each player has in front of him is properly prepared for performance. Some composers do this themselves, but many don't. Some, in fact, put down stuff that is almost impossible to play as it stands, and needs perhaps special marking as to fingering and bowing and phrasing. All this the conductor should put into the player's part beforehand if he wants to have an easy, pleasant rehearsal. You see, it is irritating for everyone to have to sit about while the conductor discusses a lot of detail with one single player. Rehearsing is an art in itself. I think it has a lot in common with training in any sport, and I often feel that some of us might manage our rehearsals better than we do if we took a few tips from training. For instance, a great many conductors try to get everything done at a rehearsal to be 100 per cent like the performance. This seems to me not only unnecessary but wrong. The rehearsal is often held only a few hours before the concert, and it is going to improve the prospects for a lively concert if every

s been playing at their very hardest for three hours with only short break before the show. No trainer would put his team through an ordeal of that kind a few hours before their match.

My rowing days I can remember going out and doing short bursts of rowing, practising starts and so on. But a sustained race like a race wouldn't be given us nearer than two or three days before the race itself.

People sometimes ask how an orchestra would get on without a conductor. I believe that a skilled orchestra could go a long way without a conductor. In fact, I do stop now and then at rehearsals and all goes quite well. But there are things like starts and finishes and places where the music slows down or is faster, and here some kind of leader is necessary, and if a player is chosen for this (as was often the case a hundred years ago) it might happen that he will be himself playing an intricate passage just at the moment when his mind ought to be centred on the directive side of the job. Anyhow, there may be a hundred people in an orchestra and they might all have different ideas as to how the piece should go.

There *must* be one directing mind, so I think we've got to have conductors, and I only hope I've convinced you that we aren't quite useless after all.

## MY LIFE STORY

*by Vic Oliver*

THE other day I had a letter from the B.B.C. saying they would like to have my life story for a broadcast. My life story—was excited! Well, on the proper day I sat and waited for the man to come and interview me. At last there was a knock at the door.

"Come in," I said, and in he came. I knew at once he was from the B.B.C. by the nice way he talked.

"Good afternoon," he said, just as if he was chewing a nice juicy plum. "Good afternoon. Are you Vic Oliver?"

"Oh yes," I replied, "I'm Vic Oliver. And I'm all ready. Just pop the questions."

"What do you mean," he said, "pop the questions?"



"Well," I replied, "isn't this the day viewed, like all the other big stars?"

"Interviewed? I'm afraid I've no instructions, Mr. Oliver."

This was too much, even for a patient, like me.

"You have no instructions!" I said. "with your people. They don't pay any attention. Nobody cares whether I like horseback riding or fruit salad. Nobody cares if I sleep with my head outside the cover. Nobody wants to know who I am. But just let some amateur like Fritz Kreisler come along and they ask him all sorts of questions. It's unfair to organized labour. It's an unforgivable injustice!"

I think by this time he must have seen I was because he said:

"Well, Vic, if you insist, I'll interview you, but it'll be short and snappy. You know, time is money. How were you born?"

Such nerve—was I born!

"No, Mr. Wiseguy," I said, "I was put up in your company." Was I born!

"Right. Now tell me, how old were you when you were born?"

"I was two years old."

"Did you live?"

"Sure," I replied. "You should see me now. I'm a Colossal! I kill myself."

"Let me see now," said the man from the Bureau. "When were you born?"

"On the banks of the Thames at six o'clock in the morning."

"Oh," he said. "How did you know it was the morning?"

"Because," I replied, "I got up and shut off the lights."

"Did you ever go to college?" was his next question.

"Sure," I replied, "I studied pharmacy."

I was too quick for him then.

"No," I went on, "I didn't want to be a physicist. I was studying to be a scientist."

"What kind of a scientist?" he asked.

"Oh," I replied, "any kind—I wasn't particular."

"But surely you must have had an idea of what you were doing?"

anted to be," he said. "A doctor, or a psychologist or a bacteriologist."

"What's that?" I asked.

"You don't know what a bacteriologist is?" he asked.

"No, I don't," I replied. "It sounds like a Mediterranean art."

"Such ignorance surprises me," he said. "A bacteriologist is a person who studies insects and bugs."

"Oh," I said, "you mean a chambermaid."

"No," he said, "not a chambermaid. Oh, Vic, you are impossible. You are the most stupid man I have ever met in my whole life."

"That's nothing," I said, "I have a brother who is even dumber than me."

"You mean dumber than I," he said.

"No, I mean dumber than me."

"Dumber than I."

"All right then," I said. "Why argue? So he's dumber than both of us."

My interviewer went on.

"Well now, my dear V. O.," he said, "what do you think of war?"

"Say," I asked, "what's this V.O. business? Is it so much an effort to say my name?"

"No, not at all," he replied. "I just call everybody like that."

"You mean you'd call Leslie Henson, L. H.?"

"Of course."

"And John Gielgud, J. G.?"

"Sure."

"Well," I said, "I bet Bud Flanagan wouldn't like it if you said, 'Come here, B. F.'"

"Maybe you're right," he said. "But now, if you don't mind, I like to talk business."

"Business!" I said. "What do you mean, business? You're out along by the B.B.C. to interview me and you have the impertinence to say——"

He interrupted me.

"What's all this about the B.B.C.?" he said. "I'm not from the B.B.C."

"You're—you're not from the B.B.C.?" I replied.

"No, I'm not," he said. "I represent the Sure Pay Insurance Company. You see, I heard your new show on the air last

night so I came along to see if you'd be interested in our all-in risk accident policy. Now just let me show you  
Yes, as I said . . . nobody cares.

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## LAUGHS WITH THE FORCES [1]

HERE's a story about a Coast Artillery gunner who went home for leave. He was sitting by the fire reading, and he fell asleep. The paper slipped from his knee and began to burn. His wife came into the room, saw the paper burning and shouted, "Fire!" The gunner woke up with a start, grabbed the cat, slung it into the oven, slammed the oven door, sprang smartly to attention and shouted, "Ready!"

LIEUTENANT EATON (Coast Artillery)

## LAUGHS WITH THE FORCES [4]

Short story: There was once a Nazi gentleman.

LANCE-CORPORAL DICK CALDWELL

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## MAKE YOUR OWN MUSIC

*by Harry Bidgood*

[EDITOR'S NOTE: Harry Bidgood is a talented conductor, orchestrator and practical musician. Apart from his work conducting bands and orchestras for the radio, the theatre and the films, he is known to the public as the director of the popular combination "Primo Scala and His Accordion Band". The hints which he gives here on forming and running small bands are both valuable and practical.]

These days lots of fellows and girls in the Forces, especially in small units, are more or less thrown back on their own resources for entertainment. Now music is one of the best of all

ns of entertainment, but transport difficulties and that sort thing make it awkward for big bunches of fellows to get ether for rehearsals. So the very small band is all that is—especially the very small Dance Band.

I want to try and tell you how you can get together and form a fifty little outfit for your own amusement and the entertainment of the unit in general. The chief ingredients in the recipe: a few enthusiastic amateur musicians and a lot of enthusiasm. The other thing you need is the application of some simple basic principles.

These principles apply equally well to all kinds of concerted music, from, say, a tin whistle, harmonica and spoons combination to an outsize dance band or symphony orchestra.

Let's begin by discussing how band music is built up. There are really three separate parts to it. First we have the melody which we'll call Section One. Then there's the accompaniment, rhythm or vamp—Section Two. Finally, we have the counter-melody, or obligato or *ad lib.* department, which will be Section Three.

That's the whole set-up. Just three sections to worry about. The melody section, the accompaniment or rhythm section, and the counter-melody or *ad lib.* sections. And that's what to aim at in forming any kind of a dance music outfit.

When you come to sorting out the instrumentalists in your outfit you will recognize quite easily which sections to give them. For instance, the piano and the squeeze-box can operate in all three sections, as they have each a left hand for rhythm and a right hand for either melody or counter-melody. The sax, violin, trumpet and all such single-note instruments will perform

Sections One or Three, the melody or the counter-melody, and the drums, guitar or string bass, if you are lucky enough to find one in the bottom of someone's kitbag, will go into Section Two, and stay there.

Let's talk about the piano for a bit, as I expect it will form the foundation for the larger number of combinations. Suppose that your total resources consist of two players but only one piano. Well, you can get a lot of fun from duets. Even if either player can read music, one can play a tune in the treble, using both hands to play a melody in octaves, while the other runs away in the bass. Go into conference first though, to establish a key agreeable to both! If both players can read music, they will find plenty to occupy them in the ordinary published song copies. And if a drummer can be added to the

duettists, there will be quite a satisfying dance band tune.

Now turn to another unit, where we find a piano, sax and drums. If, instead of a sax, it happens to be a trumpet or fiddle, the treatment will be the same. As there is a piano, the pianist is given a pretty free hand, or pair of hands, and the drummer, holding down the rhythm as he does, asks the pianist to supply counter-melody or *ad lib.* fill in, in taking a chorus on his own. So we can have a minimum of three choruses without getting monotonous. In the first chorus the melody goes to sax, with piano just playing accompaniment. In the second chorus goes to piano, and the third chorus goes to sax with piano *ad lib.* When you've really learned the melody, try to transpose the last chorus into another key. It's not worth the trouble. I have long since discovered that pianists who play by ear are quite good at putting a tune into another key—you know what I mean—higher or lower—and certainly avoids monotony in a small combination. Another way of getting this change of key would be for the piano player to put his solo chorus in a new key and to come back to the original key for the last chorus.

Some of you pianists are going to say, "Yes, that's well if you know enough about harmony to be able to change from one key to another, or modulate as they call it, but suppose you don't, what then?" Well, you don't have to bother with these links at all. Just let the drummer show his paces in a solo break! You and the sax player stop short in the last note of a chorus, the drummer fills in with his little solo, and then start the next chorus in the new key. The same thing happens at the end of that chorus. In these little combinations, the piano player of modulating by means of the drummer is quite important. Don't forget it. It's a useful tip, too, if you are using a pub dance orchestration in which the bridge passages between choruses consist of a lot of comic chords which might sound right on a big band, but which are a pain in the neck to a small outfit. That's a spot to introduce your drum link.

Here are one or two tips for general use. It is advisable to make one of your number the leader of the band. You can get results with several sets of ideas running wild during a performance. Make your suggestions and work out your own during rehearsal, and then make notes on what you've decided to do. Make sure you get a nice tidy start on each number. The best way to get this is for the leader to beat a bar for no

re you start to play—then you will all come in together. The other important thing is that the melody should predominate, the bloke who's playing it should be the loudest, and the others keep well down.

Now let's take a combination which includes the squeeze-box or accordion. The accordion, like the piano, can always supply two or three of our sections, so of course makes a good addition. But remember when using the accordion in these small bands that you must keep your left-hand work very crisp, turn the basses well away from your audience or microphone, if you are using one. This will help the balance of the instrument and give more pleasant results.

Let us suppose the only other instrument available with this accordion is a trumpet. So you've got a very small band, a kind of two. But you can cover the *three* sections with these instruments, for while the trumpet plays the melody, the accordion sustains a rhythmic background, or plays variations and the harmonies. And, if the trumpet wants to go to town on his own, the accordion should supply him with something very solid to travel on by playing rhythm with both hands.

These remarks on the accordion when working with a trumpet apply equally well to any other single-note melody instrument, although if it happens to be a fiddle, the accordion will tend to be played very lightly or the fiddle will be drowned.

Now I want to introduce another idea: "the drummer without a drum"! . . . I expect you have noticed those wire brushes drummers sometimes use as a change from sticks? Well, try to get hold of a pair, and with a little practice you'll get a lot out of them. And as you have no drum, in its place you put a newspaper on a table top and play that! If you can't buy a pair of wire brushes you might be able to make up a pair from one of those scourer things they use for cleaning saucepans.

Starting with this "drummer without a drum", let us make a small band by using a harmonica or mouth-organ and a whistle. First of all, let the tin whistle play the melody and the harmonica the accompaniment. Of course, the harmonica player will never be content to play second fiddle to the tin whistle all the time, especially if he happens to own a chromatic one (I know, the one with a little slide attachment), so we will let him give the lead to the harmonica. The tin whistle should follow—if he can—an obligato or *ad lib.*, or lay aside his instrument and join the rhythm department.

By the way, these two instruments, the harmonica and the

tin whistle, are limited as to the tunes they can play to account of the many differences in pitch, or key, in which they are made. You see, all real orchestral instruments are manufactured to a universal pitch, but these little beggars do not conform to the rules. But when they do agree they make a sensational change of colour, very welcome in the small combinations. Any of you people who play a wind instrument should be able to knock a tune out of a tin whistle in no time. When you go into a shop to buy one you'd better give it its posh name, for a flageolet.

Another novelty instrument in which you might be interested is "the comb and the paper". Probably you don't know how to perform on this simple instrument, but just in case you don't, here's the recipe. Get a comb—not a small pocket comb, but a wide one. Then fold a piece of fairly thin paper over the comb, place the comb inside it with the teeth of the comb against the paper fold. Hold the fold together above the comb, place it in your mouth, which should be slightly open, and hum or sing into it. You can get some pretty good effects with the comb and paper supported by piano and drums, or wire brushes or anything else.

I strongly advise you band leaders to follow up the idea by using the comb and paper. You needn't use one of the members of your outfit. Spread the idea round your unit, get everybody practising, then have an audition and pick the best. But don't be surprised if, at your first concert, your audience bring out their own combs and papers and join in!

Now I am going to suppose we have a combination of instruments for business. It consists of trumpet, sax and piano, and a trumpet-player also plays, or doubles as we call it, on the tin whistle, and the sax on the tin whistle. We are looking for a number in which we can show off our novelty instrument. Well, we must have a gay simple tune with no complicated harmonies. You wouldn't expect "Blues in the Night" or "More Kiss" to sound very brilliant on a tin whistle, would you? No, we should look for something like "The More We Are Together". There's a tune you can do anything with! It has about two changes of chords in the whole thing, so our harmonica player will be pleased. Having chosen the tune, we must work out a routine. The first chorus should always be very clear and straightforward, so we'll give the melody to the sax, and let the trumpet take a simple obligato part, and remember, Mr. Trumpet, to play softer than the sax, as he's got the lead. We'll give

second chorus to piano solo, which will give our doubling parts time to change their instruments for the third chorus, which we introduce our novelties, tin whistle and harmonica. We want some special assistance from the pianist here, for the whistle won't play in the same key as the rest of the band. We've found the key he can play in, though, so we'll ask the pianist to learn a chorus in that key.

This doesn't apply to the harmonica if it is a chromatic one, but if it happens to be the old type with no slide we may not be able to use it in this chorus. Of course, we can give the harmonica-player a chorus on his own, in which case the pianist will have to learn another chorus in *his* key. But it happens that the harmonica and tin whistle in this outfit can find a key suitable to both, so our third chorus will be tin whistle lead and harmonica *ad lib.* obligato. We want one more chorus to finish—a full band chorus back in the original key, with trumpet lead, and sax *ad lib.*, so our pianist will have to fill in four bars on his own while the other boys change instruments once again. Now I'll just check that routine over. Here it is:

1st Chorus—Sax lead with trumpet obligato.

2nd Chorus—Piano solo.

3rd Chorus—Tin whistle lead with harmonica *ad lib.* obligato (this chorus in another key because of the tin whistle).

4 bars link from the piano for the change of instruments and to bring us back to the right key for the band.

4th Chorus—Trumpet lead with sax *ad lib.* obligato.

You'll find that will make a well varied and interesting arrangement for the number.

A different sort of outfit might be one which included a violin, squeeze-box, and a guitar. But don't forget we still have to maintain *melody, accompaniment, and obligato*. The first two of these are essential and the third depends more on the nature of the combination. Of course, you will get music of a sweeter variety from this combination than from the others we have discussed, and for that reason many of you will prefer it. But it's still a matter of taste.

To begin with, try to play a chorus of say "Music, Maestro Please". Try it like this: First of all the violin takes the melody (or lead) for the first half chorus, with an accordion obligato.



Then the accordion takes the lead for a spell, gato, and we complete the chorus with the violin and the accordion filling in a much fuller object a good finish. And the guitar plays a rhythm all the way.

There are one or two things to notice here. The melody must stand out. I know I've said this must always remember to let the melody be heard as loud as the chap who's playing the tune. So remember this rule on such occasions. For if the singer will try to sing louder and you will sing.

Let me remind you again of another thing. Always get a good start into a number. Nothing before you start the time. You know, at the tempo (or speed) you are going to play.

All tunes are not equally easy to start. Some are, and start off on the wrong foot, like "Swanee". This has what is called a half-bar lead, it by counting a bar and a half for nothing. You will get hold of this idea quite easily if you play on the march to this tune, and say, "left, right, left, right," instead of "one, two, one, two," like this: "left, right, left, right." Do you get the idea?

Sometimes you get just one note for a lead, like "Pete". You *should* be able to get a start after that. You get the "feel of it", as it were.

The way you end a number is also very important. You must play right up to the last note and finish it off cleanly. If your audience won't know whether you've finished or not, you won't get a hand! Always work up to a finish on, and end on a couple of good chords. Don't plan to finish all numbers with the same ending. In the early jazz days. I am not suggesting identical mournful blues ending we used, but us ending.

There is one more important question to be decided. Are you going to learn your tunes? There are two courses—one is to learn them by ear, and the other is to learn them by music. I won't need to explain much to the chap who learns by ear—you know, "he plays like an angel and can't read music"! But I must point out that with a book

els you should watch very carefully that you learn each number properly and play it the same way each time it is performed. If you don't do this, and if you put in different chords odd twiddly bits every time, you are likely to put each other

Don't think I mean that you should never try out any new things—far from it! All I mean is that this should be done at rehearsals, and not unexpectedly during a performance.

Now about the blokes who read music! I don't suppose you *all* be able to read dance band orchestrations. Many of you find them too difficult, or unsuitable for a three-piece band. With a certain amount of ingenuity and imagination you can do wonders with ordinary song copies. And you will be able to put a good-sized programme together at a very low cost, for there are plenty of song books available in the music shops containing perhaps a dozen tunes at about the same price as one dance orchestration. It is only fair to point out to you that you shouldn't expect to find the very latest dance tunes in these books, but you will find all the past favourites.

Well, there you are. If you can absorb most of these suggestions and put them into practice, there should be some good things about. In any case, you'll have some pleasant evenings trying them out. Good luck to you!

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## WOMEN AT WAR

I've a sort of predilection  
For an A.T. upon prediction.  
There's another who's a plotter:  
In my eye I've also got her.  
At a certain winch I wot of  
There's a WAAF I think a lot of,  
And the Navy's got a WREN  
Or two I write to now and then.  
Yes, by and large and all in all,  
I'm glad I heard the bugle call.

ALFRED DUNNING.

## LAUGHS WITH THE FORCES [5]

Two flies were once standing on the cover of a jam-pot. One was a very well-bred fly—he'd been to Eton and in the Ballo Barrage, very high-class; and the other was quite a common:—don't think he'd had much education at all. They had been standing there a while when this common fly, not the one that went to Eton, started rushing round and round the cover of the jam-pot. After he'd been doing this for a bit, the well-bred fly said, "Hi, you, what do you think you are doing?" And the common fly said, "Well, can't you read? It says 'Tear round the dotted line'!"

FLYING-OFFICER PEARCE-ELLIOT

## "THE EXPERT TALKS"

*Captain Tommy Rose, the well-known Test Pilot*

As a result of twenty-seven years of flying, which has enabled me to spend about 10,000 hours in the air, I think I might almost call myself an expert pilot. But I cannot claim to be an expert Test Pilot. There are a few of the greatest Test Pilots of the world in this country: Georgie Bulman, Cyril Uwins, Philip Lucas and Lancaster Parker, amongst others who are still with us. Jerry Sayers, Chris Staniland, Val Baker and a few more have left the ground for the last time quite recently—good hunting, old warriors.

Test flying can be divided into two main parts: Testing Prototype aircraft and Production Testing—that is flight-testing aircraft as they come off the line in the factory. The latter is a straightforward and almost monotonous job. One knows the design, performance and flying characteristics of the type sometimes too well, and they are flown simply to ensure that they are up to these requirements. If they are not, adjustments are made and they are retested until the aircraft is handed over to the service one hundred per cent efficient.

Testing a new type is quite different. The Chief Test Pilot has actually watched the growth of the child from the drawing-board to the time it is wheeled out of the shops for the first time.

advice is sought (and sometimes acted upon) in various tails of design, and from many hours spent sitting in the cockpit he knows where all the knobs are, blindfolded. Models of particular aircraft have been undergoing wind tunnel tests, so he knows almost everything it is likely to do before he sets it off for the first time, having satisfied himself after innumerable taxiing trials that everything is in order. Nevertheless, the first flight of any new type of aeroplane is rather a big venture.

Occasionally unpleasant things happen and it has to be remembered that a prototype aeroplane is an exceedingly valuable thing. If it is destroyed all development is held up till a second one is built. Consequently, if things do go wrong, it is up to the Test Pilot to do everything possible to bring it down in one piece, and baling out is absolutely the last resort. Devotion to duty in this respect has cost many well-known Test Pilots their lives. Many will remember that Philip Lucas was honoured a short time back for safely landing the prototype of what is now a very famous fighter, after a most serious structural failure had occurred. Had it happened to me I'm afraid I would have gone over the side. Had he done so the R.A.F. would possibly be still waiting for this type.

Above a certain speed it is impossible to get out of the cockpit owing to the terrific pressure of the air. When you hear a pilot baling out at 400 m.p.h. and getting away with it, you can bet your life that he was thrown out by a sudden change in the attitude of the aircraft. Even if he gets out in these circumstances it is odds on the pilot hitting some part before he gets clear.

A friend of mine was doing diving tests on a new type at 15,000 feet. As he reached his maximum speed the tail-plane stalled and the aeroplane bunted on to its back. This caused him a temporary black-out, and when he came to, hanging inverted, he released his safety harness and fell out, just before the aircraft started to disintegrate completely. On his way out he found that he had left his left boot and sock in the machine in some inexplicable manner. As it was a clear mid-winter day and it takes a long time to get down from 15,000 feet, he was exceedingly cold, in fact so cold that he was treated for frostbite in the left foot for some weeks afterwards.

Chris Staniland always said that the most amazing experience he ever had was on the first occasion he had to leave an aircraft by parachute. The machine was in a very erratic

uncontrollable flat spin, and as recovery was impossible to get out. He managed to get clear, but, having waited for three seconds as he was falling, he was just about to pull his rip-cord when he found himself back in the cockpit with a bang. The machine must have dived or sideslipped and levelled out just as he caught up again. He saw that he had waited for a considerably longer interval the next time he eventually opened his parachute and floated safely to the ground. He cannot imagine how many million to one the odds are against something like this happening would work out.

A great many people think that a Test Pilot's life is glamorous. That is completely wrong. As I have said, it is sometimes even dull, but at all times the work is interesting, especially the work of making the design side believe that their pretty little aeroplane is not perfect. It is only when one flies the finished product and finds it good, it is a great feeling. Yes, I suppose even we Test Pilots have our

## STORIES FROM DEVONSHIRE

*by Norman Kendall, Devonian*

THIS first story is a true one. It concerns a real Devonian countryman. Some years ago I was shooting at Bisley and, not knowing what to do on the Sunday, decided to run up to London. I invited another man from North Devon to come with me. We got talking about what we'd done and I found he had never been outside his native county. After tea I took him to the Regent's Park for the band concert. Arriving early we went to the seated enclosure. A few minutes before the performance I told him to stand up and look at the crowd. For a moment or two he stared about him and then he said:

"Where do 'em all come from?"

I replied, "This is only a small corner of London."

He promptly said, "But, do 'em get enough to eat?"

"Of course they do," I replied.

"Yes," he went on, "but do 'em get greens and tattlers? Do they do down to Atherleigh?"

A hiker was touring Devon and, arriving at one of the villages, spoke to an elderly man sitting outside a cottage. :

use me, but there seems to be nothing but elderly people and I suppose you are the oldest inhabitant."

The native replied, "Goodness me, nobody ever dies 'ere. They feels like that they goes to Torkay or such places, and t by any means the oldest 'ere. I'm only seventy-six, and ot a father alive."

The traveller replied: "I should very much like to see him." Vell," said the old man, "if you don't mind waiting a few es I'll get 'en out; you see, he's upstairs puttin' Granfer to

and Jim Endacott went every Saturday to the village to the r to have his week-end shave. On a Monday following one se weekly visits the barber had an urgent call from Mrs. cott to come to the house at once and bring his razor. ng at the cottage, he enquired the reason for the urgent call old fellow could not want shaving again so quickly. e wife said, "An't ye yerd? Jim 'ave died, and as he looks crubby, I thought I would like to see 'en decent before he's l."

Let's 'ave a look at 'en, missus," said the barber.

ostairs they went, and after looking at him she enquired rice.

The barber said, "'Tis a bit expensive; tuppence in the ordi-way, but for a corpse 'tis five shillings."

He looked at the dear departed for some time and then said: don't think I'll bother to 'ave 'en done; he idden going ace special."

A farmer was driving rather a decrepit old car down a steep when it got completely out of control, and finally collided a telegraph pole, bringing it down, wires and all. He was ed senseless but came to quickly, to find himself holding mful of wires. The first thing he was heard to say was: nk goodness I've got a 'arp."

A tourist asked a yokel the way to a certain place and could et a satisfactory reply, so proceeded down-hill. The road ned to be very narrow and also rather steep. He had just ed at the bottom when he heard a terrific shout, and looking he could see the yokel beckoning him. Unable to turn, he sed all the way to the top of the hill, only to be told er's my brother. I've asked 'ee the way and :

neither."

day or two after the clocks had b  
"a parson, calling on Farmer Snel

observed that a tall clock in the corner of the kitchen had not been put on.

He pointed out the fact to the farmer and asked for the reason. "Raison?" he answered. "I'll tell 'ee the raison purty quick. That 'ole granfer there in the corner 'ave told the truth vix ninety yer and I ain't got the conscience to make 'em tell a lie now."

"But," said the parson, "you've put the little one on all right."

"Aw," answered the farmer, "thicky there's a little old rattle-trap German toad—'tid'n no odds about 'ee!"

### "AND NOSMO KING SAYS"

Yes, and talking of Devonshire, I'm living in a little village down there at present. Staying at the Manor House with Lord and Lady Tevirpo are two little evacuee boys from London. The first morning at breakfast the two little boys sat down at a huge table and waited patiently. Presently his lordship arrived and sat down at the head of the table and began to read the morning papers. This went on for about twenty minutes, when his ladyship arrived, sat at the other end of the long table and proceeded to open and read a large pile of letters. This went on for another twenty minutes, and at last one little boy turns to her ladyship and says, "Excuse me, Lady—but when the 'all do we eat?"

His lordship rose from his seat, walked over to the little boy and, patting him on the back, said, "Thank you, my boy. I've been dying to say that for the last thirty years!"

My wife and I went to tea at the Manor House one day and there was a lovely little kitten there. All the ladies were admiring it, and one of them asked her ladyship what its name was. "Oh!" she replied, "it only arrived today, and we just call her pussy!"

"But," said one of the ladies, "you really must find a name for her. There are plenty of pretty names—there's Fluff, Kitty, Flo, Marie."

Just then his lordship came in and one of the ladies said, "Do please help us! We're trying to find a name for the kitten—now what would you call her: Fluff, Kitty, Flo or Marie?"

His lordship looked at the kitten for a moment and replied: Thomas—definitely!"

## DOGS

*by John Cremins*

Superintendent of The People's Dispensary for Sick  
Animals of the Poor, Incorporated.

People who keep dogs are seldom tired of reading about them. There are a few stories about dogs which may interest them. But for all a word to those who haven't a dog and haven't a hobby. You want something which will prove absorbing, interesting also at times quite exasperating, try keeping a dog. Perhaps you think it's difficult to feed a dog these days. Well, it's as easy as it was, but I'll have a word to say about that in a moment.

Keeping dogs seems to be a favourite hobby in Anti-Aircraft Balloon Barrage units. It has its difficulties, of course.

One day I was passing a rather isolated camp in the country, and I was really surprised to see how many dogs were lined up outside the huts whilst the troops were on duty. There's the first difficulty. It must be almost impossible sometimes to give your pet enough exercise when you are in the trenches. Well, instead of chaining your dog on a lead try this. Drive two pegs into the ground about ten feet apart and run a line from one peg to the other close to the ground. Then attach the end of the lead to the wire with a small wire loop, so that it runs along freely. Your pal will get plenty of exercise this way, and exercise, don't forget, is half of a dog's happiness. Now about this question of food. Meat and biscuits are difficult. Just lately I've been feeding my dogs on a mixture of potato scraps and bullock or sheep's paunch, with a small quantity of the outer leaves of greens or cabbage, well cooked, and they have done well on it. I occasionally give them a meal too, but scraps of one sort or another from the kitchen. None of the food I use, of course, is fit for human consumption.

The choice of a dog is partly a matter of taste and partly a matter of finding one suitable to the conditions in which it will have to live. My favourite dog is the cocker, and for company, comfort and protection it can't be beaten. I think they show in their eyes more faith and love than any other breed. All dogs show beauty in their eyes, but what other dog can show the expression that the cocker does when master and dog are out for



fun! You probably know that the name "Cocker" dates from the time when this breed was used for finding woodcocks to shoot.

The best dog I think for barrack and camp life is the coated fox terrier type. The coat is easy to dry if the dog gets wet, and the body, being farther from the ground, does not get wet in the under parts, as with the Cairn, Scottie or ham.

Talking of soldiers' dogs reminds me of an incident that occurred in India. I was in the Cavalry, and in the holiday the squadron took a bare-back exercise of about twelve miles over really rough country, including dried-up nullahs. We were allowed to take the dogs, and nearly every one had a dog of sorts. There were tall dogs, short dogs and thin dogs, of all sorts and descriptions. The dogs were left behind after a few miles and trotted on their own. On one of these occasions the sergeant-major was thrown off in a nullah, and for some reason or other he missed. Anyway, the senior sergeant took us back to the camp minus the sergeant-major. After breakfast the squadron was waiting for the sergeant-major to return. When he came in sight he was escorted by about fifty dogs, mongrels of all sort and description, which had set out with the sergeant-major, and decided to have the sergeant-major's company on the way home.

Our squadron-leader went rather purple in the face. Finding it shortly, he informed the sergeant-major that if there was nothing better to do than take all the mongrels in the barracks for a walk, it was time he left the army and opened a kennel. The sweating, footsore sergeant-major tried to explain, but was informed that if he had not been drinking then he could have ridden properly, and so it was all the same. But the sergeant-major was known as "Towser" from that day onwards.

There are many stories told of the devotion of dogs to their masters. Here is one of a man's devotion to his dog. G. L. Leveson, in this story of the late Lord Rosebery and his dog Mutton. Lord Rosebery was crossing from Liverpool to Dublin when Mutton fell overboard. "Stop the ship," cried his lordship. The captain was very sorry but he could not stop the ship for a dog. It had been a man it would have been different. "Ah, that can easily be arranged," said Lord Rosebery, and immediately dived overboard. The ship was stopped and Mutton and his master saved.

was in a friend's house recently when a raid started. We made for the garden shelter, but when we got there the two belonging to the family were already in their place in the corner. I remarked at this and asked if they had been trained for the shelter. My friend said, no, and not only did they take cover when the family was at home, but also took shelter if a raiding party were sounded and the family was absent.

I cannot vouch for his next story, but I was told of one Alsap who always grabs a large dog biscuit before diving into the garden shelter. Neither bombs or guns stopped his meals when he came hungry.

In spite of many people's belief to the contrary, most dogs that are not afraid of thunder are not usually nervous during gunfire. My pal does get nervy during a raid, give him a couple of grain potassium bromide tablets or two aspirins in a little while. They won't put him to sleep but they will steady him considerably.

One last point! If you take your dog out into the country, let him run over growing crops or chase livestock in the

A rat or rabbit on the common, yes. He'll get lots of fun out of that, and so will you.

## LAUGHS WITH THE FORCES [6]

I got a friend in the Land Army, just a little slip of a thing, who finds the work very hard. Well, she was milking a cow this morning and feeling very very tired. So she said, out loud, "I am fed up, it is hard work!" The cow turned round and said, "Oh, I *am* sorry for you, love. I tell you what—you sit tight and hold tight and I'll jump up and down."

CORPORAL BILL WADDINGTON.

## "QUID PRO TEN"

Ten little gunner boys a-manning of a gun,  
None saw one find a quid and then there was none.

A. T

## CRICKET—THE ART OF BOWLING

*by Charlie Parker*

[EDITOR'S NOTE: Charlie Parker of Gloucestershire is greatest of bowlers and a terror in Test Matches. ] impressive list of County Cricket records to his credit are a few of them: Hit the stumps with five balls in quick succession; has taken the third most wickets in the world; the world's hat-trick record; once did the hat trick against the world's best batsman; took one hundred wickets in the first innings; took one hundred wickets in the second innings; ever, between May 7th and June 12th. When Charlie talks on bowling, he talks as an expert.]

I WANT to take you right through the course of the ball from start off with the bowler's run. The run up to the crease is more important than a great many young cricketers think. To the fast bowler it acts as a kind of spring, and to the slow bowler as a kind of balance.

The run should start slowly and gather impetus as it goes along, winding you up, so to speak, for the delivery. It mustn't get jerky, and *don't* waste energy in the run.

For the action, you must stand straight upright. The front account bend your knee; the front leg over the crease stiff from the hip downwards. Your arm must come straight through towards the ground, letting your shoulder swing through. "Hitting the pitch with the ball" is the correct term. A good action is a joy to watch to a cricketer. There are a good many today, but those who saw it will always remember the beautiful run-up and action of the late Ted Martin. This sort of thing only occurs once in a decade.

Now we come to the most important part of the run-up, "length". The word as used in cricket is a little misused. It is not a stereotyped distance pitched from the wicket; it depends upon your batsman. A very tall batsman needs the ball a little bit farther up the wicket than the short one. The length to bowl is what you want the batsman to do. The longer the bowler's run up to the shorter one (at the same time) the better. A difference is only a few inches, but makes for all you want. A word to the medium and slow bowler: never bowl short. A "full toss" is better than being short. I knew one bowler who bowled the full toss very cunningly. If there was

against every wicket got with a full toss—there would be a of red ticks in the Surrey Score Book.

For slow bowling, make use of the crease. Bowl close to, sometimes wide of the wicket; also a half-yard behind the crease, now and again, as it is the equivalent to the trifle slower. Always come through right downwards with the shoulder. You will lose that nip from the pitch. My old friend, Wilfred Rhodes, would say you were "putting" the ball.

Placing the field is a very important part of the game for a skipper and you. You place the field according to what you are going to bowl. For instance, should you decide to bowl from the off stump, or just outside and running away, you could do without a square leg. Should you bowl at the leg, or leg and middle, you would want extra cover and have cover straighter. I must never forget that you have ten more men helping you, and that there are only about three set positions. You place the others according to what you are going to bowl.

The googlie is really an exaggerated leg break. By going under the ball with the wrist, it produces the opposite spin, and a bowler should start to learn very young. It must be bowled a good length and at a fair pace to be effective. Good batsmen would sooner have the ball turn than keep straight, if they have a good length. Also, you must hide the wrong 'un, as they call it, or you won't worry even number eleven—leaving out Wally Hammond. There are heaps of technical things in bowling to learn, and my best advice to young bowlers in Britain is to learn to spin the ball. Leave the swerving alone and it will be a brighter outlook for British Cricket.

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## "MY BEST MOUNT"

*by Gordon Richards, the Champion Jockey*

THERE'S no doubt in my mind about the best animal I've ever ridden. The answer is Sun Chariot. And what a character she is! The first time out in 1942 she was very unfortunately bitten. This was a great pity, because it was the only time she was ever beaten. After this unfortunate happening, we went to Newmarket and she put up a sparkling performance in the Thousand Guineas. Then we started getting ready for the Oaks. Now about

ACK-ACK, BEER-BEER

GORDON RICHARDS.  
THE CHAMPION JOCKEY

time it's usually hot, and a bad time for fillies. Well, a time she gave us! In the last work before the race she in one of her worst moods. Mr. Darling, the trainer, said e, "Get on her, Gordon, and go down and come a mile and if."

We set off twice and twice she bolted into a ploughed field. Third time I put a boy there and I said, "If she does it again, her with anything you've got!" But it made no difference. Into the ploughed field we went. I said to the boy, "Get of her."

When he tried, she went at him bald-headed and I thought was going to eat him. Anyhow, eventually we got it over, you'd think she'd done nothing at all. She was as tough as 38.

Well, we went to Newmarket for the Oaks. We got to the and she started her old tricks again. Up went the gate and d Sun Chariot, trying to go to Cambridge, the opposite way. emed hopeless, and we were fully a furlong behind.

Suddenly she took it into her head to go after them. Well, way across the flat we caught them up. I didn't interfere her and let her go in case she started anything else. She ed straight on and won in a canter. Unless you'd actually en her you wouldn't believe what she'd done.

From that she went on to the St. Leger and with the cooler her and the long-distance work she was an entirely different e. It was a treat to be on her back, and, as you know, she in grand style, beating all the colts, including the Derby her.

There's an old saying that horses are not machines, but I k that Sun Chariot is as near a machine as you could get.

## LAUGHS WITH THE FORCES [7]

BOOKMAKER went into a restaurant for lunch and asked the ter for a piece of fish and some runner-beans. He was ight a very small portion of plaice and three beans. When I finished he handed the waiter sixpence.

"Thank you, sir," said the waiter. "Is this for me?"

"Oh dear, no," said the bookmaker, "that's for the d."

"But your bill is two and sixpence," said the shillings for the plaice and sixpence the runner-be  
 "Oh no," said the bookmaker, "I'm just paying the beans, because when there are only three run place money."

A/C. Michu

## TO A B.S.M.

Guns, Ack-Ack, three—  
 Jerries for the downing of;  
 Shells for same for  
 Putting up a show;  
 Men and ATS for ditto—  
 Sergeant-majors, for—well, what?  
 Refer to heaven—  
 Maybe God will know.

## WHAT PRICE CRIME

EX-DIVISIONAL DETECTIVE-INSPECTOR JACK HEN New Scotland Yard, introduced a new character to phone in his portrayal of "Inspector Dick Barton o The stories were written by Patrick K. Heale and and many of them were based on experiences and ca the inspector had taken a principal part. Here is stories:

### THE MAYFAIR MURDER

*By Jack Henry and Patrick K. Heale*

THE three men invariably met for dinner and a y once a month. Each was famous in his own pro each found pleasure in the other's company. The had begun at the conclusion of a notorious murder Old Bailey, in which each had figured prominently. Inspector Dick Barton, of New Scotland Yard, h a wife murderer to trial, and Sir Francis Leigh had h

for the prosecution. It was the evidence of Dr. John Street, eminent pathologist, that had sent a particularly brutal derer to the gallows.

But that was nearly two years ago, and on this early March evening, with a chill wind blowing outside, the roaring club fire shed with enticing comfort. Dinner was over, cigars were lit and they settled down to the ease of their deep chairs.

The doctor spoke first. He was tall, slim, with greying hair and deep-set dark eyes. His rather sombre expression was offset by a humorous twist on his thin lips.

"There would be no inducement to crime if there were no receivers ready to trade in the spoils. And I think you will agree that crimes of violence are the exception rather than the rule," he said.

Barton smiled wryly and Sir Francis studied the ash on his cigar. Both men were over six feet in height and well proportioned. The advocate's features were long and serious, with deeply grey eyes. In contrast, Barton's features were chubby, his mouth whimsical and there was a permanent twinkle in his eyes. The newspapers had long since dubbed him the Smiling Criminal.

Sir Francis shifted his position to half turn towards the doctor.

"That's true only up to a point, my dear fellow," he said. "There are certain types of organized crime which require no receiver. The theft of a valuable painting, for example, or a masterpiece, or rare gems. These are easily traceable and therefore not likely to interest the ordinary receiver. What do you think, Barton?"

Barton glanced from one to the other before speaking.

"The receiver is always the shadow behind the crime. There is always a market," he began. "Many criminals believe, however, that the receivers can protect them if they get into a spot. Identically, the average criminal has a profound belief in his own ability to outwit the police, and it usually takes him a lifetime to learn that the game is not worth the candle."

Barton paused thoughtfully for a moment, then continued: "Sir Francis mentioned organized crime and its relation to rare pictures and gems. No gang would lift pictures or gems which could be readily identified without having a pre-arranged market, for your receiver is still the big bad wolf."

"I see the point you make there," mused Sir Francis. "The danger of a crank who would go in for collecting such valuables



would not be the type to execute the robbery, but he might sponsor the enterprise."

"I wonder if you remember the case of Silas Trellis," said Barton reminiscently. "He was something of a recluse and had a place in Mayfair. He collected rare, uncut gems."

"If it's a good yarn, let's hear it right from the beginning," chuckled the doctor.

Barton smiled. "All right," he said; "here goes. It was a case that gave me a great deal of trouble. Old Silas Trellis was well over seventy. He had only one servant, a middle-aged woman who had one evening off a week to visit a daughter. It was on her return from one of these visits that she found her master lying dead, close by his safe. He had been shot. The safe door was open and his valuable collection of gems gone.

"When I arrived on the scene I was forced to one conclusion. The old man had been surprised and compelled to open the safe. Having done so, he was shot in cold blood as a safeguard against identification. It didn't take me a long time to find out that the crime was well organized, perfectly timed and carried through without a hitch. There was absolutely no clue or prints to work on."

"A pretty cowardly type of murderer," said the doctor.

"Yes," said Barton, "and it had me on the raw. I was determined to break the case or it should break me. I worked solidly on it for three months and then I began to feel confident that the line I was following would lead to success. I remember my sergeant, Jim McGrath, coming into my office one day looking very gloomy indeed.

"I see the Press is beginning to whip up the Mayfair murder case, sir," he said. "Do you think they have sniffed out anything about young Brennan?"

"No, I don't think so," I replied, "but it's damnable luck their raking it up just at this time. It'll stir that mob up and keep them on their toes."

Well, that same afternoon, a certain Johnnie Breen walked into a club called "Walley's Dive". The place was deserted except for Sarah, the barmaid.

"Whisky, Sarah . . . a double," ordered Johnnie.

Sarah poured the whisky and started to top it up with water. Johnnie pushed the water aside.

"What's the idea trying to spoil my gut-rot?" he snapped.

"what's up with this joint, anyway? Everyone gone

rah leaned over the counter towards him.

If you haven't been around it's likely you ain't heard," whispered. "There is going to be a blow-up tonight, ie, and my tip is, lay off the bottle or take it easy w."

hnnie Breen stared at her with cool, expressionless eyes. He tossed the whisky down his throat and pushed the glass rd.

"Fill it up," he said quietly. "No, never mind—gimme the . . . " He reached forward, but Sarah's hand still clung to it. "ohnnie, please!" she pleaded. "There's going to be hell se tonight and you'll need to be wide awake when it starts." hnnie pulled the bottle free, and half smiled as he did so. "You're a nice girl, Sarah, but don't interfere with my way nking, see!"

"Okay, smart boy," Sarah replied. "Lift the top off your if you want to. I was passing you a tip that Shiner Doolan rking up a big hate."

ohnnie watched her quietly as she nervously took a cigarette a packet and set it between her lips. He gave her a light ook one for himself. As he held the flame of the match en them he asked: "So you think that gorilla wants to put re into me, eh?"

Most of 'em round these parts know you don't scare easy, nie," she said. "But Doolan is different. He ain't par-ar what he does or how he does it. You've had 'em guessing since you drifted in here."

ohnnie's lips twisted into one of his rare smiles.

Don't worry on my account, Sarah. As far as I am con-ed, Doolan is just a wind-bag."

mpulsively Sarah laid a hand on his half-raised arm, before glass reached his lips.

Do me a favour, will you?" she pleaded. "Duck out ght and stay out."

ohnnie was still smiling.

"I never noticed how pretty you were until you looked like " he said. "What's your worry, anyway?"

Sarah drew her hand back and stared above his head.

"Oh, I don't know," she said. "I suppose I'm all sorts of :

but I picked you out as a cut above the rest of this muck . . . When your name came up——"

The smile faded from Johnnie's lips.

"So, my name came up," he said. "Who did the talking? Was it Walley?"

Fright leapt into Sarah's eyes and she dropped her voice to an almost inaudible whisper.

"Don't ask me that, Johnnie. I've said too much already. You know that. They're in there now and——"

Sarah broke off as she heard the door to Walley's room open behind her. She caught the glint in Johnnie's eyes and turned to see Doolan standing in the opening.

"Hullo, Johnnie," said Doolan easily. "Come on in. I've been waiting for a word in your ear. How's tricks?"

"What's on your mind, Doolan?" asked Johnnie.

"Got something that might interest you," replied Doolan. "Come and join the boys and I'll spill it."

Johnnie crushed out his cigarette without taking his eyes from the gang leader.

"I'm not looking for a team-up," he said, "and I'm not the sort of mug you can push around, Doolan."

"Aw, come on, Johnnie," said Doolan with a wide grin. "You know me."

Johnnie reached for another cigarette from Sarah's packet.

"That's why I'm thinking fast," he said. "Then, pausing to light the cigarette, "Still, I can listen."

Doolan crossed to the counter and raised the flap.

"That's the boy, Johnnie," he grinned. "Never mind the bottle; we've got plenty in here."

Johnnie collected his bottle and glass.

"I'll bring my own just the same," he said, winking at Sarah as he passed.

"Watch your step," she murmured, and stared for a moment at the door which closed upon him.

Inside the room, three men were sitting round a table: Walley, shifty and unscrupulous, owner of the "Dive" and ready for any crooked business so long as there were good picks; Sudge, the runabout of the gang; and Williams, who did the stealing and driving when the gang went into action.

"Here y'are, come and sit over by the window," said Walley.

"Thanks, I like windows best when I'm facing them," said Johnnie coolly. He tapped Williams on the shoulder. "Thanks to me," he said.

At a gesture from Doolan, Williams rose and took the window seat.

"Johnnie knows his way around, Walley," laughed Doolan. "Even brings his own liquor so's he don't get any knock-out ops."

Johnnie slid into his chair and Doolan took the head of the table.

"I always drink according to the company I'm keeping," said Johnnie.

There was an angry murmur from all except Doolan, who continued to beam.

"No offence, Johnnie," said Doolan. "We know a right time when we meet one, so let's start even, eh?"

"What are you celebrating, anyway?" asked Johnnie.

"We're not celebrating anything, yet," said Doolan, "but we've got a piece of news for you. We checked up on your story about being on the run from Brummagem."

Johnnie nodded his head. "And you found that the boys in the area are really anxious to question a certain Johnnie Breen about a certain job," he said.

"Yes, that's right," laughed Doolan.

"What's funny about it?" asked Johnnie, icily.

The pose of good humour fell away from Doolan's features.

"For one thing," he said, "it's funny that none of the boys in the area know what your particular line is. Neither do we about that matter."

The two men measured each other.

"What do you want me to do about it?" asked Johnnie. "Send you a postcard?"

"Let's keep on the rails," said Doolan. "We've got nothing against you, except that you are new around these parts, and you don't mix and you don't talk."

"And I don't cut into anyone else's racket, do I?" snapped Johnnie.

For a moment he and Doolan glared at each other. Then Doolan spoke.

"Don't get me wrong about this," he said, "but some rat squeaked on Tiff Leman. He's just been picked up."

"Leman!" said Johnnie. "He knocked off an old geezer who collected stuff too hot to handle, didn't he? Those sparks always carry a jinx on them!"

"That job was so neat," growled Sudge, "they couldn't harp on him unless they picked up some o' the stones."

"If Leman was picked up while trying to park 'em on fence, that's where you want to start sniffing," said Jol earnestly. "Those birds get cold feet when it comes to murder."

"That's what I think," quavered Williams. "It's Shray, the dirty twister. There's your squeaker, Doolan, he'll shop the lot of us."

Doolan whipped round on Williams with rage burning his eyes.

"Keep your trap closed, Williams," he snarled. "I speak out of turn once too often."

"Isaac Shray, the antique dealer," murmured Jol casually. "I didn't know you pulled jobs in his class, Doolan."

"No one said we were in on that job," said Doolan venomously, "and don't try to get smart, Johnnie, because we know how to take care of anyone who doubles on us."

Johnnie Breen smiled slowly.

"Oh, a little protection society," he said. "I'll remember that when I start losing my nerve." He looked from one to the other round the table. He read menace in every expression. They disliked his cocky arrogance, but they disliked more "lone wolf" tactics and his utter contempt for the power of ruthless combination. Above all this they were obsessed with the growing suspicion that Johnnie Breen was not what he claimed to be, a crook on the run.

"Suppose you start telling us what your particular line is," said Walley.

"I'll give you three guesses, know all," Johnnie replied. Walley stared back at him with unveiled hate.

"All right," he said. "Nark, Squeaker, or is it Busy?" Johnnie's features contorted with anger. He kicked back his chair.

"Why, you dirty little greaser. I'll mix that up with your teeth," he said.

They were all thrown slightly off balance by the sudden violence of Johnnie's move towards Walley, but Doolan restrained him before any damage was done.

"Take it easy, Johnnie," said Doolan silkily. "We haven't been calling everyone names since Leman was pulled in. You ain't done nothing except help you since you took a dive. I'm only trying to get things straight."

"And because I'm on the run, do I have to open up my story of my life?" snapped Johnnie.

"Skip it," purred Doolan. "Sit down and keep your hair

Johnnie picked up his chair and swung it round. He dddled it and leant on the back. He was now in a position to quickly in an emergency with the chair in his hands as a upon.

"Okay," he said. "Now let's get down to what you're really ing at."

"For one thing," said Sudge, "a feller hiding out don't walk und dressed like a tailor's dummy."

"And you only came among us since a certain job with no s on it hit the Yard in the kisser," added Walley.

Johnnie smiled easily. He appeared not to notice that plan was studying him through narrowing eyelids.

"What's the matter with you mugs?" he asked. "You let ller like Leman loose to unload some junk on to a twister like ay and then yelp when he gets hurt."

"You might be right about Shray," said Doolan, "but there's thing don't fit in. Shray reckons he had a bust at his private ce and he lost some samples Leman had delivered. He says can pick out the feller that did the job."

Johnnie poured a drink and spoke without glancing up.

"Maybe that's the rat you're looking for," he said.

"That's what I'm thinking," said Doolan, "but it's put a per scare into old Isaac. He's coming in tonight to see if any of the mob. We want you to be around, Johnnie."

"Ah, now we're getting around to it," said Johnnie. "Well, ever had any time for rats, so you can count me in."

"Good boy, Johnnie," said Doolan. "If you're in the clear ll know how we stand afterwards."

Walley got up and moved round the table to stand between nnie and Doolan.

"What time is the old buzzard getting here?" asked Johnnie.

"Round about nine o'clock," Doolan replied.

"Okay, I'll be here ahead of time," said Johnnie.

"You're not going anywhere," said Walley with a slow grin. "e're all sticking together until Isaac Shray turns up."

Johnnie half turned to look at him.

"Still on the jump, Walley?" he asked. "Well, I'm putting another job to be in on this tonight. It's too bad, but you'll have to like it that way."

Doolan glanced from Johnnie to Walley.

"You go ahead, Johnnie," said Doolan. "But if you're on level, you won't mind Walley going along with you, eh?"

Johnnie got up and faced Walley.

"Why not?" he said. "We may get a bit more the next hour or two. What do you say, Walley?" Walley looked back at him with eyes baleful and "That remains to be seen," he said surlily. "Con As the door closed on the two men, Sudge turned "Do you think one of us ought to tail 'em?" he asked. Doolan grinned. "No," he said. "Walley can him, and if he's what I think he is the mob will enjoy tonight."

"The mob?" queried Sudge.

"Yes," said Doolan. "I put it around and they here just waiting. And if I give them the tip, wouldn't care to be Mr. Johnnie Breen."

The three men looked at one another and Doolan again.

A Squad car cruised round Soho, with Inspector the front seat and Sergeant McGrath at the wheel. Barton laid a hand on McGrath's arm and the car to the kerb and stopped. Fifty yards down the street, John Walley crossed the road and entered a doorway.

"It looks as if Johnnie has an escort, sir," said McGrath.

"Yes, and I don't like it," frowned Barton. "Walley all kinds of a rat if he gets the position behind your back."

"Do you think Johnnie's walking into something McGrath.

"That depends on whether he's up to Walley," Barton replied. "At least he's on his own territory where he is lodging. Better drive round for a bit."

As the car slid into motion, Barton fell into a silence.

In the passage that led to his room, Johnnie felt the gun in his back.

"That gun will get you into trouble one of these days," he said quietly.

"Get inside," ordered Walley, as Johnnie pushed the door, pausing to glance over a wildly disordered room back-heeled the door shut.

"Now, I wonder who's been giving my place a free

annie. "I'm sure it wasn't you, Walley," he added, and the asm in his voice was obvious.

"Don't start making cracks," said Walley evenly. "What out this job you spoke of?"

"Oh yes, that job . . ." Johnnie began, and in the same ant he revolved like a streak of lightning. The edge of his n palm struck Walley just below the ribs and he buckled like lding sack. Before he could recover his wind, Johnnie had wrists handcuffed behind his back and had got possession of gun.

"A bogey," gasped Walley. "I knew it!"

Johnnie hauled him up on his feet.

"That's where you were really clever, Walley, and your sonal hate nearly pulled my lay-out unstuck."

All the venomous detestation of Walley's shrunken soul red out through his glaring eyes.

"Don't start clucking too soon," he ground through his icked teeth. "They'll rip you up when you go back without "

A grim smile played round the corners of Johnnie's mouth l it suddenly began to dawn on Walley that he was in a t.

"I'm going back, all right," said Johnnie. "We want Sudge, liams and Doolan. That should just about clear up the st cowardly murder we have had for a long time."

With the realization that he was in the net, Walley cracked.

"Murder!" he cried in startled bewilderment. "Listen, nnie. . . . I—I didn't have nothing to do with that ck-off, straight, Johnnie. . . . I—I ain't no murderer!"

Johnnie glanced at him in disgust.

"Save your squealing until you get in the dock," he said. 's the rope for all of you this time."

Then Walley's nerve went completely. Perspiration gathered his forehead and started to trickle down his nose.

"No, no, Johnnie," he croaked. "I know I've been agin yer, ause I knew you were smart, but . . . yer know I had thin' to do with that killin', doncher—doncher?"

Johnnie watched the shivering Walley through his half-sed eyelids.

"I had a night out with Tiff Leman," he said. "T . . . I n I had an easy job for him. He got drunk and outh wide. But he didn't give Isaac Shray aw-- l that. It was all I had to wait for, the n--



"Leman's a dirty twister, Johnnie," pinched my gun for that job. Gawd, may what it means, Johnnie?"

Johnnie looked from Walley to the ground then back.

"So it was your gun, Walley . . . this Walley nodded dully.

"Yes, but I had nothing to do with it," earnestly: "Gimme a chance, Johnnie. I . . . where the stuff's hid . . ."

Johnnie spun round as the door opened wide grin spread over his features as Barton in.

"I was afraid our friend Walley might into your shoulders," said Barton, "but I see

Walley leant back against the wall he watchful eye of McGrath.

"He did better than that, sir," said John up with the Mayfair Murder gun."

Barton whistled softly as he took the gun.

"We've got the two slugs that killed S. ballistics department can check up on the m. "Anything else?"

"Yes, Isaac Shray is the receiver. Some have broken into his place and lifted the sample smiled enigmatically. "I think I know where

Barton smiled. He nodded understanding.

"Shray is beginning to panic a bit,"

"If you could close on him quietly it might night."

"Excellent work, Johnnie," said Barton. to pin that bird for two years. Leave him t faced Johnnie squarely. "Would you rather down tonight?" he said. "It's a grave risk, y

Johnnie tautened. The smashing of this the one big thing in his short career and he k through.

"I'd rather keep the date, sir," he said. o'clock. We want Doolan, Sudge and William number of ways out of that place and if you tr out someone inside, one or more of them may

"All right, Johnnie," said Barton; "it's you he went on: "So I was right about Doolan, eh

"Yes, sir, Doolan runs the outfit," Johnnie replied. "If you keep Walley's arrest quiet . . ."

"I'll do that," said Barton, "and we'll be with you at nine. p your timing right and you'd better take McGrath's gun. it if you have to."

Johnnie took the automatic, checked it over and slipped it in his pocket.

"There's only one thing more, sir," he said. "I think Walley will be ready to tell you where to find the remainder of those 18."

Johnnie watched Barton and McGrath take Walley away. Then he locked the door and settled down to rest and run over final plans. He had only one fear. Would Doolan and the others take fright and make a get-away?

"Walley's Dive" was teeming with excitement. The wolves of the underworld were gathered in force. The whisper had gone round that Johnnie Breen had fooled them and that he was a police informer. They were out for blood, for Johnnie Breen's blood.

A greasy little pickpocket jangled out a tune on a tinny piano, while a blonde sang the words in a shrill soprano.

Doolan, Sudge and Williams sat at a table apart. It was now minutes to nine and their nerves were on edge.

"Suppose he pulled a quick one on Walley!" said Sudge. "We're not sure——"

"Stop that blasted row!" yelled Doolan at the musical duo.

"What about Shray?" asked Williams. "He ought to be here by now."

"Shray'll turn up at the last minute and Walley will keep Johnnie Breen away from the busies," said Doolan, trying to conceal his own anxiety. "And don't forget we make our get-away as soon as the mob get at him."

A swift silence fell over the room as the door opened. Johnnie stood there for a moment, then closed the door behind him. He was holding a gun and crossed deliberately to Doolan's table. When the crowd got its breath back, and with a low murmuring buzz of voices started a slow surge towards him.

Doolan came slowly to his feet to face Johnnie.

"Well, Mr. Detective," he said, "you've got a nice nerve coming back here with a squirt in your hand. Where's Walley?"

"You should worry, Doolan," said Johnnie. Then, with

a gesture towards the table: "Get on your feet, Sudge Williams!"

There was no doubting Johnnie's determination, his stiffer trigger-finger or the ice in his eyes. Sullenly they obeyed. Without turning his head, he shouted at the swaying mob: "The first one who moves out of turn gets a bullet in his guts, I mean it!"

There was something in Johnnie's voice that caused them to pull up in their tracks. Doolan's features contorted with anger and a lust for vengeance.

"You're not getting away with this," he yelled, and the mob: "Come on, you rats, why don't you get him! Doolan with the nark! Go on, rush him!"

Pandemonium began to break loose among the crowd that they again started their surge, cautiously.

"This place is surrounded!" shouted Johnnie above the noise. "There's no get-away for any of you."

At that moment two blasts on a police-whistle sounded something like panic spread among the crowd. An instant later Barton led his men in the raid.

"Stay where you are, everybody!" he shouted. "We're taking three men for murder, and if any of you others want to trouble you'll get it."

Doolan spun on his heels towards Sudge and Williams.

"We've got to get through that back door," he said. "Cops don't shoot."

Barton started to force his way towards Johnnie, and the mob, loyal to their own, did their best to get in his way and retard progress. Johnnie, closely watching every move of Doolan, Sudge and Williams, failed to notice a thug who was folding a mackintosh. A well-directed aim took the gun out of his hand. It was an old trick, and it worked.

Doolan made a dive to escape, but Johnnie caught his coat and swung him into a collision with Sudge, while he crumpled Williams with a jaw-splitting left.

Someone slipped a knife into Doolan's hand and he leaped towards Johnnie in savage fury. An instant later Doolan screamed as the knife clattered from a ju-jitsu locked arm.

Williams, shaking the daze from his brain, found himself lying within reach of Johnnie's gun. As he raised it to aim, Barton broke through and fired point-blank to shatter his hand. The sound of the shot subdued the mob and Barton reached Johnnie's side, while his men got the place under control.

The murder in Mayfair was solved, and Detective-Constable Ennan, otherwise Johnnie Breen, was in a fair way to becoming sergeant of the C.I.D. at New Scotland Yard. Once again the forces of law and order had proved their strength, so "What Ice Crime?"

## MURRAY AND MOONEY

EVEN their relations think them funny"—so reads their billing. Certainly thousands of their fans all over the country think they are funny, and it's a lesson in the art of timing to watch them working. The stories they use are mostly those we've all heard hundreds of times, but they are "put over" so perfectly that they never fail to get the audience.

Harry Murray comes on to the stage and starts to recite—the act usually opens. Then Harry Mooney, in a disreputable top and smoking the stump of a cigarette, wanders on and interrupts him. Here is the sort of thing:

*Murray*: "Ladies and gentlemen, a monologue——"

*Mooney*: "Well, I'm here."

*Murray*: "So I see. Where have you been?"

*Mooney*: "You told me to catch a 96 bus."

*Murray*: "I did."

*Mooney*: "Well, I had to wait for the other ninety-five to go y-"

*Murray*: "Ladies and gentlemen, a monologue——"

*Mooney*: "I saw a terrible accident on the bus."

*Murray*: "What was that?"

*Mooney*: "A woman had her eye on a seat and a man sat n it."

*Murray*: "A monologue——"

*Mooney*: "My brother smokes eighty a day."

*Murray*: "Cigarettes?"

*Mooney*: "No, haddocks."

*Murray*: "A monologue——"

*Mooney*: "My cough is pretty bad."

*Murray*: "What do you do for it?"

*Mooney*: "Cough."

*Murray*: "How did you get it?"

*Mooney*: "I got out of bed in the middle of the night to get some water."



JEANNE DE CASALIS—"MRS. FEATHER"  
(See "Mrs. Feather on the Telephone", page 40)

Murray: "In your pyjamas?"

Mooney: "No, in a jug."

Murray: "A monologue——"

Mooney: "If you had a cold in your head, how would you top it from getting to your chest?"

Murray: "I haven't the faintest idea."

Mooney: "Tie a knot in your throat."

Murray: "A monologue——"

Mooney: "My brother, the tough one, he's joined the paratroops."

Murray: "Oh, has he?"

Mooney: "Yes, and after his training he got into the 'plane for his first flight loaded up with his Tommy-gun and collapsible bike. He said to the officer, 'Supposing, when we drop out, this string won't work?' The officer said, 'Pull the second one.' He said, 'O.K.' They dropped at thirty thousand feet and he pulled at the cord. It didn't work. He tugged at the second one and that didn't work."

Murray: "Well, what happened?"

Mooney: "He said, 'Blimey—I'll bet the bike's no good either.'"

## STRANGE APPETITE!

by Bill MacLurg

Just as some people may say "beer is my hobby", others say "eating is my hobby". So when an Ack-Ack gunner with a very strange appetite walked into my office one day I noted him down for the hobbies page and arranged a broadcast for him. His name was Gunner Arthur Duplock and his taste lay in the direction of razor-blades, lighted cigarettes, gramophone records and broken lamp-bulbs.

As I say, he walked into my office one day.

"Sit down," I said, "and have a cigarette."

"Thanks, I don't mind if I do," he replied. I held out a lighter, he lit the cigarette and proceeded to chew and swallow it.

"Yes, quite," I murmured, wondering what one did next. What was the correct thing to do? Offer him another or offer him the whole box along with a knife and fork?

However, he seemed quite satisfied for the moment, so I sat back and asked a few questions.

"Well, Gunner Duplock," I said, "I understand that you get through life eating all sorts of peculiar things?"

"That's right, sir," he replied. "Of course, I only do a show. It seems to amuse people."

"And you really can eat all these things? There's no about it?"

As answer he reached out across my desk, picked up a bakelite ashtray, bit off about half of it and proceeded to munch up and swallow it with apparent enjoyment.

I hastily moved out of his reach everything else which I thought he might fancy and went on:

"I'd like to know how you first started—or should I say, how you developed your rather peculiar tastes?"

"It was like this," he said. "When I was sixteen I was a man at a music hall eating razor-blades and records. I thought at the time it was a fake. Then a few weeks later I saw another man on a street corner—down by the Irving Statue in Charing Cross Road it was—"

"Very suitable," I murmured. "Go on."

"Yes, down by the Irving statue. He was eating things like that too. I watched him carefully, and when I got home I thought I'd have a go."

"The pioneer spirit," I said. "With what success?"

"Well, I chewed up a couple of razor-blades and quite enjoyed them."

"Another case of latent talent," I said. "Well now, I suppose you had a sort of urge—or should I say a call—to do it?"

"Oh no, sir," he replied. "I was just young and silly and wanted to try it."

"And very lucky too," I added. "I fancy it would have finished most people off. How did you go on from then?"

"I left it alone then until I was in the Army. One day they were getting up a Battery show and an officer came round to see who could do anything. So I said I'd do a novelty act."

"A very modest description, I call it," I said.

"Thank you, sir. Well, I put in a bit of practice chewing and swallowing a few razor-blades, and then went on to the stage. Once up there I ate some more razor-blades, a lighted cigarette, a couple of lamp-bulbs, and about half a gramophone record."

"And swallowed the lot?"

"Oh yes, sir," Gunner Duplock replied. "I always swallow all of it."

"With no ill effects?"

"Never—I like it and I'm always well and healthy."

I shook my head. "It's incredible. Do you do this sort of thing often?"

"Quite often, sir. They seem to like the act and ask me to do the shows. And the fellows are always asking me to do it in pubs." There was a certain amount of meaning in the way Duplock made this last remark.

"In pubs?" I said. "I take it that it hasn't affected your normal swallow in any way?"

"You don't mean, sir, do you——?" Duplock paused.

"I do," I said.

We went across the road. He was quite right. His swallow had not been affected in any way.

P.S.—Gunner Duplock took part in the "Ack-Ack, Beer Beer" programme on Christmas Day, 1941. During the course of the programme he equalled his previous best, by getting through two electric light-bulbs, three razor-blades, a few lighted cigarettes, and half an old record of our signature tune. A large audience in the studio can vouch for this, as well as the artist in the programme and a number of B.B.C. officials. Strange appetite! I wonder where he is now and what he's eating?

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## LAUGHS WITH THE FORCES [8]

I THINK this Coast Artillery job is too easy. You see, it's like this. We do a watch on, a watch off, and a watch in reserve. Now there's 365 days in the year, or if you like to take a Leap Year for good measure, we'll say 366. So a watch off for a third of the time is 122 days, leaving 244. Four seven-day leaves and three 48 hours is 34 days, leaving 210. Sleep—we're allowed to sleep from time to time—is two nights in bed at eight hours—another 82 days, leaving 128. Then a few quiet minutes sometimes on reserve is 20 days, plus time off for meals, 61—leaving 47, and when you're on duty you only do look-out now and again, and that means just standing on these beautiful warm nights and memorizing the waves. So if you could wangle a bit of extra leave, I don't think they'd need me here at all!

GUNNER WATSON (Coast Artillery).



## WHY NOT AN AIRCRAFT SCRAPBOOK?

*by Major G. Adams*

AIRCRAFT must be a subject of more general interest than almost any other. Apart from the hundreds of thousands of men and women in the Forces and Civil Defence Service are interested because of their work, civilian interest grows day by day. But good books about aircraft are often expensive and be hard to come by. You must have good illustrations if you are to learn about aircraft. And you must have accurate illustrations if you are going to make good models, and the making of models is often the direct result of interest in aircraft.

Making a scrapbook has always been good fun. All why not combine the two interests and make an Aircraft Scrapbook? The ingredients required are simple enough. A book to stick your cuttings into, some paste, a quick eye to the illustrations required, and the ability to scrounge them from other people's papers and magazines.

Well, yes, that will do for a start, but perhaps it would be better to start off more ambitiously. An old wallpaper book or some exercise books *will* do to stick things into, but if you beg, borrow or steal or otherwise acquire a large loose-leaf book you'll be well on the right road.

The next thing to do is to make some sort of plan or scheme for your scrapbook. It is quite a good idea, for example, to put the British aircraft in under their Commands, and to put the foreign aircraft separate, each under the country of origin.

It is surprising the number of pictures and articles about aircraft you get in quite a short time. The newspapers provide some, weekly periodicals and magazines provide others. Of course, if you can get hold of an armful of magazines devoted to aircraft, you're in clover. But, however you get them, you will find it is good fun looking out for photos.

When you come to prepare the pictures for setting out in your scrapbook, cut them so that you leave a little white edge round each one. It sets them off well and they'll look grand. And leave a space under each picture for putting in the details about the aircraft, its speed and so on. And put down the date and the name of the cutting too. It helps you to check up later on.

Another thing that adds to the interest of the scrapbook is record beside the picture of each aircraft type of the jobs it's done. And these details help you to remember the aircraft too.

When you come to stick in the pictures, don't go and slap 'em all over the back. Just along one edge will do—then you can put other pictures of the same type underneath if need be. Take up some flour-and-water paste; that's good enough.

Number the pages and make a good index. This adds greatly to the usefulness of the book.

Finally, it's amusing to have a special page at the back—or maybe you'll need pages—for pictures from the Press with some jangling mistake in each one. There was one in the paper some time ago, for example, showing the aircraft "MacRobert's Reply" and describing it as a Halifax. Everybody knows that "MacRobert's Reply" is a Stirling. You'll find lots like that if you look out for them, and they form a very special kind of treasure trove for your Aircraft Scrapbook.

## THE WOMEN OF ANTI-AIRCRAFT AND BALLOON COMMANDS

"WOMEN are taking over operational duties on Anti-Aircraft and Balloon Sites." The A.T.S. and W.A.A.F. had, of course, been doing all sorts of jobs with the two Commands previous to his news first breaking, but this was something quite different. "Operational duties" . . . how many times have you read it in the newspapers and heard it on the radio? Like the rest of Britain you've probably said, "What a fine job these women are doing," and then perhaps you've wondered what the job really was. Come with us then and pay a visit to a couple of sites and find out the work of these women who help to keep the "Roof Over Britain".

## THE BALLOON BARRAGE

ONE of London's stateliest squares is the home of a barrage balloon, a balloon that has changed its name. "Sylvia" it used to be called, but that name is painted out. In its place is a new



AIR MARSHAL SIR LESLIE GOSSAGE,  
C.B., C.V.O., D.S.O., M.C.  
AIR OFFICER COMMANDING, R.A.F. BALLOON COMMAND

me, "Romeo". This is one indication that on this site, as in any other sites in Balloon Command, the W.A.A.F. have taken over.

The hut in which they eat and live and sleep has a name painted over the door. "Ye Olde Log Cabin" reads the sign. Inside the hut is a bunch of W.A.A.F., very business-like in their crew suits.

The gramophone or the radio is sure to be playing. Music accompanies everything, all day long, whether it's washing the walls or writing home. But the music is stopped instantly when the telephone rings, as it does now. The corporal in charge of the crew lifts the receiver:

"Yes, sir. Five thousand feet. Yes, sir," she says. She places the receiver and turns to the waiting girls.

"Operations," she says. She goes to the window and repeats the order in a loud voice to those who may be outside.

Whatever they are doing the girls dash to the balloon. They run from the hut, from the garden, from the cookhouse. If it's night time, they may still be dressing and pushing their hair under their berets. If they are in bed, it is also a matter of seconds before they have pulled on their trousers and jerseys over their pyjamas. Across the grass they sprint. From the moment the bell sounds they have thirty seconds to get to their places.

The area from which the balloon flies is called "the bed". Now the N.C.O. goes over to it and shouts orders through a megaphone. The girls take them up.

"Start up winch!" is the first one. The girl in charge of the winch acknowledges the order by repeating it, as do the others when they receive their orders.

"Start up winch" comes the echo now, followed by the roar of the powerful engine.

"Off handling guys, slips and bags."

The order is carried out rapidly. The girls unhook the heavy endbags or weights which hold the balloon securely, handling the stiff guy ropes and cables with practised skill. When it is completed, the girls in charge of each side report.

"Port side ready!"

"Starboard side ready!"

The terms used in Balloon operations have a nautical flavour.

"Man the spider," is the next order, followed by, "Haul in bollard. Watch blocks."

The engine is at work now. The balloon-gear has been

adjusted to the position required for the next part of operation.

"Unfurl rudder and fins," shouts the corporal.

When this is done she orders: "Off slips, bags and pickle slips."

Once again come the reports.

"Portside ready!"

"Starboard side ready!"

"Man central snatchblock, spider and rudder bag," comes next, and the girls dash to do this part of the job.

There are three balloon positions. The first is "Bed down", in which position the balloon is inflated but tethered to ground. In the second position, "Close hauled", it is ready for flight, but only a few feet from the ground. The third is the "Fly" position. This balloon, Romeo, was bedded down. In a few minutes it will be in the air. The girls busy themselves at their posts, knowing their duties to the split second, to the fraction of an inch.

"Unbend the rip-line," says the corporal.

Then, "Pay out bollard. Watch blocks."

These orders indicate complicated and necessary parts of the operation. This business of flying these balloons is a difficult and highly technical one.

After the order "Bend on the rip-line", followed by "Swing on the rip-link", the balloon is nearly ready. In a moment it will be going up!

"Unbend and unreeve your guys."

It all sounds very strange to the outsider, but to these highly trained girls it is obviously perfectly clear.

The report comes again, confidently:

"Portside ready!"

"Starboard side ready!"

Now the corporal gives another order to the operator at the engine: "Disengage bollard; engage winch."

A lever is thrown and the cable is ready for paying out.

Now the balloon is free to rise, restrained only by the cable. It sways from side to side like a live thing. In a strong wind it can be much more difficult to handle than most live things, a vicious angry monster.

Now the command: "Pay out winch."

The engine starts, the cable streams from the drums, rapidly the balloon rises. Three thousand, four thousand, five thousand feet. Operational height! And there she is, Romeo, the pride of the W.A.A.F.!

The girls mop their foreheads with the backs of their hands as they gaze upwards proudly. That's their answer to Hitler!

## THE A.T.S. GO INTO ACTION

This visit takes us into a lonely spot in the outskirts of a great city. We are going to a Mixed Heavy Ack-ack Battery, where the girls in battle-dress are working shoulder-to-shoulder with the men. It is the girls who spot the raiders, the girls who work the height-finders, and predictors and radio-locators. The men handle the ammunition and load and fire the guns. There are about ten girls to every six men in these batteries. And they work together as a perfect and highly efficient team.

A hostile aircraft is about. The Gun Position Officer, known as the G.P.O., is in the Command Post, out by the guns and instruments. He watches the position of the hostile plane being plotted by a girl telephonist. Her chinagraph pencil draws red arrows on the map, showing that the plane is rapidly approaching the area within range of these guns. The G.P.O. gives an order.

"Sound the alarm!"

A klaxon or a siren or a bell shrills out. Gunners and A.T.S. dash to their posts. There is great competition between the teams on the different instruments as to who shall be ready first.

This time it is the height-finder girls. The N.C.O. in charge of this team calls:

"Height-finder ready for action!"

Almost simultaneously come the other reports.

"Predictor ready for action!"

"Number two gun ready for action!"

"Number three gun ready for action!"

"Number four gun ready for action!"

The G.P.O.'s assistant, a sergeant known as the "G.P.O. back", reports "Battery ready for action!"

This is a four-gun site and the mighty grim barrels now point skywards, manned and ready to meet the threat from above.

The G.P.O. knows roughly from the plots on the map in which quarter the hostile aircraft may be expected. He gives an order which brings the guns and instruments to bear.

"Go to bearing two five O, set ten thousand, angle three O."

It is in terms such as these that the figures "250", "10,200" and "30" are turned into words. "10,200" becomes "ten thousand two hundred", "9,400" becomes "nine four hundred", "130" comes "one three five," and so on.

The guns and instruments swing round and the reports quickly.

"Bearing 250 set!"

"10,000 set!"

"Angle 30 set!"

"Predictor on bearing 250!"

"Height-finder on bearing 250!"

There is a tenseness, a feeling of excitement. The is approaching for which they wait, day and night. watch the sky. Suddenly a 'plane, a twin-engined comes out of the clouds into a clear patch of sky.

"'Plane!" the spotter screams.

She has picked up the 'plane through her identification scope. It looks like a hostile. The G.P.O. rushes to the instrument, for he's the man on whom the final decision rests. The spotter was right—it's a Junkers 88!

"'Plane!" shouts the G.P.O., his hand pointing to the shape in the sky.

The G.P.O. Ack roars, "'Plane," and starts calling the angles and bearings of the approaching target as he reads from the scales on the identification telescope. This helps the predictor and height-finder teams to pick up the target in eye-pieces.

"Bearing 183. Angle 23."

"Bearing 185. Angle 24."

"Bearing 188. Angle 26."

The guns and instruments swing round, gun-layers moving in and out like pistons!

But now the girls on the predictor have got it.

"Predictor on target," comes the report, in a voice thick with excitement.

The height-finder girls are only a second behind.

"Height-finder on target!"

And finally, "Section on target!"

The girl in charge of the height-finder team gives her "Read", and the first height is read from the instrument. 10,200—ten two hundred.

"Set 10,200," orders the G.P.O. This order means the height as read from the height-finder is set into the pre-

is wonderful instrument works out the problem of where the is must aim and what fuse must be set in order that the shell of the enemy plane may be in the same spot in the sky when the it explodes at the height of ten thousand odd feet. It is at future position in the sky that the guns must fire, allowing for speed of the plane and for the time the shell will take to reach that future position.

The report comes from the predictor.

"Angle steady. Predictor steady."

The girls are working calmly, and with amazing speed, despite the tense excitement.

The G.P.O. gives the order, "Fire!"

This first order of "Fire" is not an order to the guns, but tells the predictor team that everything is ready for a fuse to be predicted. The angle and bearing of the guns is already set on the predictor, for this information is fed automatically to them from the predictor.

Now comes the fuse-setting from the predictor.

"Fuse 21."

The G.P.O. Ack roars it. "Fuse 21!" The rounds are set to the appropriate fuse and loaded into the guns. This first fuse is the most important of all; it must be dead accurate. The speech-blocks crash home and the N.C.O.s in charge of the teams signal ready. It is all done in a moment. Then from the girl in charge of the predictor comes the word "Fire", indicating that the instrument is on target. The shells lie snugly in the guns as the G.P.O. roars again the order. But this time the order is to the guns.

"Fire!" he cries.

There is a deafening crash and the shells go tearing skywards. But the girls on the instruments are too intent on their jobs to be worried by it. They carry on, keeping their instruments "on target", supplying the information to the guns which will correct their aim for the next salvo.

Now the first shells are bursting, bursting just ahead of and slightly below the Junkers.

And there is no mistake, they've got it! The plane is losing height, it's dropping. Smoke is pouring from the starboard engine. Down she comes in an ugly spin, her other engine screaming, out of control.

That means another Jerry in the bag, and one more scored for the men and women of Anti-Aircraft Command, one more name added to the already imposing list of "certain hits".



## REGINALD PURDELL ON "SEARCHLIGHTS"

THIS afternoon I have been asked, nay, beseeched, to an address on Searchlights. I think I can say with modesty that I am particularly well qualified to speak on this subject as an aunt of mine lived in New Zealand years. The history of the searchlight is extremely interesting. It was invented in 1877 by a—I wonder if any of you know—that the original searchlight was used at the Battle of A

It consisted of an ingenious combination of glow-worm fireflies. No less than seven million five thousand four hundred and sixty-two glow-worms were used and an equal quantity of fireflies. These were compressed into empty beer bottles and at night were suspended, pointing upwards, from tall trees. The beam from the bottle picked up enemy aircraft, namely carrier pigeons. Unfortunately, this suggestion of glow-worms and fireflies resulted in a great intermarriage between the species and in many cases, the offspring of the union lost all its glow and fire. Hence the searchlight came out.

Necessity being the mother of invention compelled me to experiment with other methods of night illumination during the Elizabethan period an apothecary named Loudwater thought of the brilliant idea of hitching his searchlight to a star. It was completely useless. Years went by, and it was not until the Boer War that the searchlight came into its own.

The origin of its name is fascinating. A certain General Magersfontein said to his aide-de-camp, "Jolly dark, give me bright lights and suchlike". "Suchlike" eventually became corrupted into "searchlight", and that's why we have searchlights today.

Talking of darkies brings us to the "talkies", or films. The beam projected from the cinematograph is the stable companion of the modern searchlight. A particularly interesting story is told of Dr. Marjicango, the Marathoonian explorer, who was snowed up in the Arctic regions, used a searchlight for signaling his whereabouts to the rescue party who came to search for him. The beam from the light became frozen and the doctor was rescued by sliding on his own initiative.

In these days of civilization when there is so much darkness

th and good will to all men the searchlight is only used in modern warfare. I expect a great number of you wonder what terrific power is used to produce that strong white beam which brightly stabs the impenetrable sky? I haven't the slightest idea, but I will do my best to explain it to you. Vast quantities of luminous paint are smeared on to huge mirrors or looking-glasses. The phosphorus lights up the mirror, the mirror reflects the light from the phosphorus, the phosphorus then lights up the section which lights up the phosphorus, and this sort of thing goes on *ad nauseum* until the small hours of the morning when the "Clear" goes.

Searchlights are manned by groups of happy, laughing young men known as scroungers, sons of guns and bombardiers. They take an insane pleasure in their work, and become so attached to their searchlights that they often refuse leave rather than be parted from them. As you know, searchlights are omniscient—they are broad in the beam. In conclusion, if there are any questions to be answered, it just can't be done!

## LAUGHS WITH THE FORCES [9]

WADAYS most of the letters I get in my office start off "Dear Sir, Unless . . ." So this morning I was quite surprised to find the letter of another sort in my tray. It read as follows:

"Dear Sir, I understand that while I have been out of town I have been having an affair with my girl friend. I shall be glad if you will come round to the above address on Monday at 10 a.m. to discuss the matter with me."

My reply to this letter was as follows:

"Dear Sir or Madam, I have received your circular and shall be pleased to come round to your house at the time stated to attend a meeting of the shareholders."

SQUADRON-LEADER KENNETH HORNE.

## THE PRAIRIE TWISTER

*by Frank W. Lane*

DID you see the recent announcement that a balloon has been erected in the Panama area? Now that's interesting because that balloon barrage may have stand a more violent onslaught than any other barrage in the world.

No, I don't mean from Jap fighters trying to shoot it rather down!), but from the greatest aerial destruction which this world ever experiences—the tornado.

Of course, violent thunderstorms occur in most parts of the world; but the area around the southern states of America seems to be the special playground of the tornado or, as the Americans sometimes call it, the "prairie twister".

Now, you Beer-Beer chaps have worries enough about balloons when a high wind is about (yes, I'll bet you could yarn or two), but you can thank your lucky stars that you don't have to contend with a "prairie twister". If you and were unfortunate enough to get in its direct path, it is are that neither balloon, cables, lorry, or crew would stand the onslaught except in bits and pieces.

Let me tell you just what it is like to be in the tornado when a "twister" is on the rampage.

The sky is pretty black, and there is a strange sort of sphere about. As you look away to the horizon it seems a bit of the black sky is dipping down to earth. As you are looking, a huge funnel starts swaying from the sky, and for all the world like a gigantic elephant's trunk.

Then you see that this great funnel (it might be a mile has actually touched the earth and, what's worse, it is swirling and twisting in your direction. With a great roaring, sound it comes sweeping across country at the speed of an express train. And wherever the foot of the funnel touches a living thing, and not much else, will escape terrible destruction. So that's where you begin to get a move on—quick.

For that funnel is composed of madly whirling air. A fifty-mile-an-hour wind is bad enough—and it is. But a wind travelling at ten times that speed—500 m.p.h. Imagine that the damage done by a wind like that almost beyond description. In five minutes a tornado has been known

hundreds of people, injure thousands more, and destroy property worth millions of pounds.

I said just now that a Balloon Barrage unit would never give a tornado attack. If you still doubt it, listen for a moment to just a few selected items which I have collected of what a tornado can do when it's really going places.

A locomotive engine was standing on the rails when a tornado came along. It picked the engine up, turned it right round, and dropped it down on another set of rails facing the other way. Another time a horse was picked up. It was *flown* two miles through the air before being dropped again.

The furious winds of a tornado turn harmless objects into jets with enormous powers of penetration. Wooden splinters driven clean through solid boards; corn-stalks have been driven into doors and fence posts; sand has been whipped along with such force that it has entered human bodies like miniature shot-gun pellets; and during a tornado in Calcutta a bamboo fence is reported to have been driven through a wall six feet thick, and a side of mud faced on both sides with brick.

No, I don't envy the Beer-Beer men of Panama if ever a hurricane twister decides to pay their balloons a visit.

## THE LAST BUGLE AT DUNKIRK

At the dawn of June 22nd, 1940, broke over Dunkirk, the last British bugle call sounded across the hell-ridden beaches. It was blown by Sapper John Heraty, who is now with a searchlight battery. Here is his story as he told it at the microphone:

"Yes, it is a strange story. During my seventeen years' service with the drums of a famous Midland county regiment, I had some pretty stirring experiences; but the one I shall never forget is blowing that last call at Dunkirk. I'd gone over there with a Company of Royal Engineers—a fine crowd they were. When the big retreat came, things got a bit mixed, and I fought my way back with a London County Council detachment.

"And how those London boys could fight! Our job was to blow up the roads and bridges right under the noses of the Nazis, so we were naturally among the last to get back to Dunkirk. The place was looking like hell by that time. But of course, we didn't know what was happening, the same as you

people over here did. All we knew was that bombs and shells were all around us, we had no food, the Nazis were right behind.

"Then the miracle happened for all the others, and a Polish merchant-boat from the Narvik iron-ore trade came to pick us up. Those Polish soldiers were real heroes. They sent us every scrap of food they had on board—biscuits, bully, tea, tinned soup, and everything they could lay their hands on. That was definitely welcome . . . I should say so!

"The major who had taken charge of us—he belonged to an infantry regiment, I think—was as cool as ice. He called for a bugler. There were two of us left on the beach. I still had my drums on my arm, so I got the job.

"‘Bugler,’ said the Major, ‘food is nearly ready. Blimey, the cookhouse!’

"So there stood I, amid all the smoke and bombs, and beside the cookhouse for the last British soldiers at Dunkirk.

"A couple of hours later we were out at sea.

"So the last British bugle call in the great Battle of Flanders was ‘Come to the Cookhouse Door, Boys’. Funny thing. You can dream all your life of sounding a great battle-call on your bugle—and when your moment comes, the call is just ‘Cookhouse’. But that’s the good old British Army all over, isn’t it?"

*May 29th, 1941.*

## THE LITTLE PADDLE-STEAMERS

The little Paddle-Steamers  
 Cannot take you out today;  
 If you want to go to Brighton,  
 You must go some other way.  
 You may think it proper  
 To take a rest from work,  
 But the little paddle-steamers  
 Have gone churning to Dunkirk.

The little paddle-steamers  
 That anchored off the pier  
 Inviting you to Clacton  
 With buns and British beer,  
 They're sorry, but they're busy  
 And for pleasure may not lurk.

For the little paddle-steamers,  
Have gone churning to Dunkirk.

And ghostly little steamers  
Riding gaily 'gainst the breeze,  
Will follow all the Fleets of Time  
Across the Seven Seas;  
They joined the Senior Service  
And their job they didn't shirk,  
When the little paddle-steamers  
Went churning to Dunkirk.

MARGUERITE K. ROBINSON (W.V.S.).

## EYE IN THE SKY

### Sketches on a Searchlight Site

*by Gerald Kersh*

#### INTRODUCTION

In bits of nowhere, all over Britain, men live like lighthouse-keepers, with one eye in the sky.

Living on a searchlight site you live in the gone-tomorrow atmosphere of a guardroom—only you won't be gone tomorrow, or the next day. You have to swallow life like a very dry, hard biscuit—little gulp by little gulp—day by day, not looking too far backward or forward. You wash down each insipid day with a little swallow of warm sleep—and watch and wait. Time is your worst enemy. He's harder to kill than a cat. You can't love him. He goes hand in hand with boredom. Yes; time, there, is the old hoary, limping man with the hour-glass. You dig over your mind for something fresh to say, but you know perfectly well that you've said everything. If you strike a joke or a story you haven't yet told, you yell for joy like a prospector whose pick-stroke in a desert turns up a gold nugget. . . . Now, Joe Twist always has something to say.

Speaking for myself, I'd rather have Joe Twist to keep me amused than a wagon-load of paper-back novels.

He is a long-drawn-out, hatchet-faced man with a mouth shaped like a scallop on a pie. His figure is nothing much to look at: it reminds you of a loosely tied bundle of bones and

veins and sinews, roped together with nice strong nerves packed in roughish red skin. He combines the eye of a hawk with the tongue of an Arab story-teller. He is the king of the site. I say nothing for the moment about George Grouser, Charlie the Chancer, and the Old Sweat. As a man bends the unlikeliest-looking bit of iron into astonishing shapes, so Joe Twist bends situations into stories. He prizes a pearl out of the coldest, greyest, conversational ice. He enjoys nothing so much as a bit of story-telling. Everyone loves Joe Twist. Look—have you ever been in the dressing room of a boxer before a big fight? He is tense: time is watched, the pot that never boils. He is edgy. We are all now in the Army. Boredom is an enemy that has to be beaten, just like Hitler. This is where Joe Twist comes in. He claims that he can hit a flying sparrow at 15,000 feet that is neither here nor there. He can put a boot on the nose of Time and hurry it up. He may fight like a devil; but he can talk like an angel. It is for this that I want you to meet him, and I only hope I've done him no less than justice in taking him down.

## JOE TWIST AND THE GREAT COCKROACH RACE

It was in a voice of utter gloom that George spoke. "I said: 'The ants is coming out with the warm weather, got a perfect right to say: 'The ants is coming out with the weather.'"

Joe Twist looked up. "What's the matter with ants?" "I nearly read a book about ants once. They're dead. They fight wars, and catch little flies and squeeze 'em for George sneered, "Flies' milk! Don't tell lies."

Joe went on: "Insects are dead smart, I'm telling you. at my grandfather. No, he wasn't an insect; he was in the Crimean War. He was taken a prisoner by the enemy. Well, my grandfather was a terrible gambler. They used to call him 'Twist-and-Bust'. Pontoon, Nap, Euchre, Poker, Housie-housie, Crib: he'd lose his pay on anything you name. He'd bet you on the number of hairs on your head. He'd lose every penny he had."

"What's that got to do with insects?" George said.

Joe replied, "My grampa was taken prisoner in the C

And in prison he had plenty of insects. Millions, of all kinds of different insects. See? But most of all, they had a kind of fat cockroaches. Got me? Cockroaches as long as your thumb. Follow? Well, my grampa was the friendliest man imaginable and everybody worshipped the ground he trod on. And he actually made friends with a cockroach. Fact! See? If he was wet, see this dry, cut my throat if I tell a lie! He used to tell this cockroach Bart, after his uncle, Bartholomew, because this cockroach walked in much the same way. Got it? Well, one day, having nothing to do, my grampa was watching Bart talking about the cell, when he noticed that Bart moved quicker than most other cockroaches, being, I dessay, bigger and stronger. See? So my grampa started Cockroach Races. He made a bet. He entered Bart against any other cockroach in the jail; and Bart romped past the post every time. My grampa didn't invent cockroach racing. It was a sort of national sport in Russia about that time. See? And soon, this here cockroach Bartholomew was the champion of the prison, and he won my grampa pounds and pounds of tobacco and stuff. Got me?

"Well, then there comes along a hairy great Cossack, and he's the jailer . . . understand? He says to grampa: 'Look here. We've got a cockroach that'll beat yours hollow.' My grampa says, 'Oh yeah?' The Cossack says, 'Oh yeah,' and they arrange a race, a great race. I dessay they still talk about that race in these parts. The Cossack cockroach was a big, powerful one. But Bartholomew was lighter and slimmer and better built for speed and endurance.

"They got their cockroaches on the start. The Cossack cockroach tries to bite Bartholomew, but they're separated. Then . . . they're off! The Cossack roach starts like a raving maniac. And my grampa, looking at him, realized that its mother had been and dipped him in vodka—a trick that was, I think, permissible according to Cockroach Racing Regulations; but it was taking a mean advantage, because my grampa hadn't drunk any vodka; and if he had he would have drunk it. Besides, putting Bartholomew in it would have seemed like sort of lack of confidence in his powers . . . and Bart was temperamental, a bally-dancer.

"Well now, the Cossack cockroach runs like Mahmoud, but Bart sticks to his heels. They go round the course. It must have been like Tattenham Corner. The cheering was deafening. Our boys had their dough on Bartholomew, and all the Russians had theirs on Taras Bulba, which was my grampa's name.



Last lap! Bart is dead beat. The other one is tired but still going strong. Bart drops behind. My grampa 'Barty, dear old Barty, don't let England down!' And believe me or not, Bartholomew makes one terrific effort, heard what my grampa said, and understood. He overtook the Cossack and beat him by two lengths. Then he crawled to my grampa, and sort of looked up at him like a kind of dog he did!—and fell down dead. His heart was overstrained. That was an insect for you! What d'you think Archie?"

Archie said: "Will cockroaches really run races, Joe?"

"They will if trained," Joe replied. "If fleas will pull carts, if trained, why shouldn't cockroaches run races?"

"We ain't got no cockroaches," George said, in the same tone of gloom. "Everybody else's got cockroaches. We need something." Then suddenly, "I don't believe that about grampa's cockroach. Heart overstrained! Cockroaches got any hearts."

Joe smiled. "They're kind to their children, so they should have. Well, come on, let's go and have a look at the bloomin' firmament!"

## THE CHANCER CHANCES HIS ARM

"How much would you take to haunt a house, Chancer?" George. "I never see a man look so bloomin' much like a Walking Dead. Hiya, White Zombie!"

The Chancer scowled. "Is it my fault there's no justice in the world? Leave me alone, George. There's no justice, I tell you, no justice!" He got to his feet and went out, slamming the door behind him.

George looked after him thoughtfully. "What's up with Chancer?" he said. "He's getting worse'n, yus, worse'n."

"I know," said Joe Twist. "Worse'n you, George. I know what's up with the Chancer. . . ." He laughed.

George said: "I bet yer does. Go on, Joe, spill it."

Joe Twist laughed again. "It's funny an' all—dead funny."

"Ha-ha-ha, dead funny, ain't it!" said George, in a mocking tone. "But what's dead funny?"

Joe Twist settled himself more comfortably on the sofa. "Well, yer see, blokes," he said, "the Chancer aht the bloomin' fool'd issself again. Listen.

"The other day, he comes to me, very secret like, and says  
al, I'll tell yer the gawd's honest truth; I'm browned off."

"I says to him: 'Ain't we all more or less browned off on a  
archlight site, mate? Chancer,' I says, 'it's one o' the horrors  
war—the monotony of waitin' an' hopin' for a few Jerry 'planes  
pop at, and feelin' that you're just the last o' the forgotten men.  
imey, sometimes yer get the idea that the war's over an'  
body's told you.'

"Then he says: 'I got to get away for a week-end, just for a  
eak, or I'll go barny, stone blinkin' barny.'

"Sympathetic like, I advises him to apply for a week-end.  
here's no harm in trying, old cock.' But I could see by the  
hancer's face that he was working out some deep dark scheme.  
e?

"Well, about a day later, he comes to me wi' a letter t'hat'd  
rived, an' lookin' as 'appy as a cat in a stewpot. He says,  
al, what d'you think of that bit of news?" And I read the letter,  
it went as follows:

"Dear Charles. . . . I am writing this so that you can  
t passionate leave at once, as Dad has had an accident. He fell  
to a cooling-vat at the brewery where he works and was nearly  
owned in beer. Now he's raving like a delirious lunatic saying  
: was rescued too soon. You are the only one who can deal  
th him as you understand each other, under the weather.  
or Mum nearly died from fright seein' Dad wheeled home on a  
lice ambulance like a singing corpse. She screams for you  
ght and day, and I fear the worst unless you come home right  
way. I am in trouble, too, because our house was blitzed and  
eorge being away in the Marines, me and baby have no one to  
rn to, nothing to eat, nothing to wear, nowhere to go—nothing.  
can't stay with Mum and Dad because Dad in his delirium  
inks it was me pulled him out of the beer-vat and threatens to  
op my head off. We all need the comfort and support of your  
ain and intellect, so come quick, hopin' this finds you as it  
aves me.

"Your loving sister,  
"Carrie.

"Well, after reading this, I looks at the Chancer, and he was  
oking as miserable as you like. I looks at the postmark on the  
velope, and it was Bingwell . . . a village about a mile and a  
alf away from here. Set me thinking, that did, and I asked him,

"Where does your sister live, Chancer?" and he said "Birmingham."

"Then I take a good butcher's look at the letter, and it was written on that blue paper the Chancer uses, and nice as you please it was his own handwriting. You can take my dickybird for it—he'd sent the letter to himself, as evidence to get a week-end off with."

"I says to him, 'I ought to tip you off, Chancer. If the officer has any reason to suspect that a letter ain't quite genuine he's entitled to 'phone the police and have them check up on you sister's address, and the other facts stated in the letter.'"

"He said: 'Are you insinuating I wrote this here letter myself?'"

"I said: 'Heaven forbid.' But he was shook, shook proper he was, 'cos he putted, and worried some more, and said: 'He liable to check up on this, is he?'"

"'Not a bit,' I says, looking at him fatherly like. He fold the letter very careful like, and puts it back in his pocket. Then he picks up a piece of brick, and kicks it as hard as he can, and hurts his toe. And he swears solidly for about five minutes and shouts, 'There's no justice!'"

"Then he went away."

"Well, about twelve hours later I sees the Chancer polishing reflector and looking very ferocious indeed. I said: 'What up, Chancer?'"

"He says, 'I got family troubles.'"

"'Serious?' I asks."

"'Serious!' he says. 'I believe you. Take a look at that'—and, believe me or not, he hands me the letter he'd shown me the evening before. He'd forgotten. Then he caught my eye, and blushed and put the letter away again."

"See what had happened? The Chancer is so used to spinning yarns and trying to kid people, that he's got to believing the tales he tells. And there he is, going about with a letter that he's written himself about his troubles, with a face as long as a fiddle talking about there being no justice in the world. And this strikes me as being really funny, if you get me! 'Cos last time Chancer had trouble, he was an orphan, see!'"

There was silence for a little while, and then George said "There ain't no happiness in this world, so we've got to be as happy as we can without it."

"Yes," said Joe Twist, "but a bloke must be in a pretty bad way if he's got to go and make up his own blinking troubles... or stone the sparrers, what a lark!"

## JOE TWIST' ON DISCIPLINE

GEORGE started it: "The curse of the bloomin' Army today is a flamin' tape. The redder the blinkin' tape the better they blinkin' well like it."

"Tch . . . tch . . . Sich language, George!" said Joe Twist mockingly.

"I can do better'n that, Joe Twist," replied George, "an' anyways, I'm entitled to me opinion an' I sticks by it—so what?"

"Red tape," said Joe. "Why, you 'orrible old grouser, George, yer dunno 'ow lucky y'are! Y'ain't never seen red tape, that's a fact!"

"Hoh . . . ?" George said. "An' who says I hain't seen red tape?"

"I docs," Joe replied. "Nor y'ain't seen pink tape neether, nor alone red tape, you old perisher. Never told yer about old Pigface, did I? Nah, there's a case in point, sec? 'Course, his name ain't really Pigface, if yer foller me. We only called him Pigface 'cos——"

George interrupted him. "Wot's pigs an' faces got ter do wi' red ruddy tape?"

"Where's yer 'magination, George?" Joe replied. "Nah, picture a pig with a small clipped mouse-tash——"

George said: "Garn, get away wi' yer. Pigs with mouse-tashes . . ."

Joe Twist went on in a patient voice: "I'm on'y askin' yer to imagine what a pig with a little tooth-brusher would look like, or you can picture the dial of our old R.S.M. That's why we called him Pigface, sec? . . . Or don't yer? Well, anyhow, he's the backbone o' the British Army an' as smart a soldier as ever put a man in the book. Yus, the most regimental man in the Army, an' some o' 'em even called him Regimental Pigface."

George said: "But wot's Pigface got ter do wi' me an, my red tape?"

Joe continued: "Wot a bloke you are, George—a man without no soul. I'm trying ter tell yer that Pigface an' red tape ran together. They was part of each other, they was all in all—Pigface was red tape. An' all because he was a terrible stickler for proper order. They said he even changed into gym kit to read the sportin' column in his evening paper! 'Course, that may be so much tooty-frooty; but there's no arg-y-ment about when we used ter call him Umpity-Poo, which is Frenchy for a

little bit more, and it was always a little bit more than out o' yer. Nah, old Umpity-Poo Regimental Pigface run his home like a company. He had a whole kids and made 'em line up on pay parade for their weel. And they had to be nippy or they didn't get none, see! had a dorg—a queer dorg. I never clapped eyes on like. It was a cut between a sheep and a weasel. cherries—wot a tyke!”

“And I suppose it had a nice bit o' red tape round George said.

“No, it didn't,” Joe replied. “It was about fifteen and well on the fat side. Yus, it was podgy and fat. Pigface takes a look at this 'ere dorg one day and says like a roarin' grumpus, which was mild for him: ‘Look fat as a pig! What you need, my little flea-bound bag is exercise.’ So he calls an old soldier who used ter doin' for him, an' says, ‘Tomorrow there is a cross country you will take this here dorg on that there run as per do.

“Four solid miles was that there run, and the bat bit out o' trainin' (being about hundred years old), an' old dorg hadn't run no more than the width of the t Spion Kop won the Derby. But old Pigface's dicky like fire from heaven an' 'twere better ter drop dead fro tion than face old Pigface in a rage, so off they trots on country run. 'Course, they didn't come nowhere. man of the company came in last an' he was two hou of them. In fact, they gets in about five o'clock in the the batman whacked to the wide an' the dorg—well, hi draggin' along the ground an' his poor old knees a-kr shakin'!”

“So old Regimental Umpity-Poo Pigface looks at and says quiet like, ‘So help me!’ and then lets rip a y yourself together, yer blinketty blankin' so and so!’ poor old dorg sort of stands to attention while he t. Then Pigface starts mumbling for a bit, then yelp ‘Idle . . . idle on parade, that's wot! Very well, ye bone for supper. Dis-miss!’ The dorg nearly falls t fright, then does a groggy left turn and staggers awa that, George, is wot I calls discipline.”

George shook his head. “You're nearly breakin' r Joe. Did the poor old dorg get any supper?”

“Ah, he did an' all, 'cos old Pigface had a wife, an little whipper-snapper she was. Once inside the ho

Pigface's reign of terror ended. She ordered him about like a recruit. He had to wash the kids and the dishes, do fatigues, an' everything else. So he had no say about dockin' the dorg's upper. There's always somebody higher up, and if old Pigface ruled by red tape, his missus ruled by red petticoat red tape, so—it only goes to show!"

## JOE TWIST AND THE PRETTY BUTTERCUPS

GEORGE was browned off. "I always carries the can back," he said. "I always gets the blame. No matter what 'appens I'm the mug. Did you hear what the officer says to me? 'E groused at me. What kind of a skylark is this? There was a couple o' buttercups growing out of one o' the sandbags. So 'e blamed it on to me. What's 'e want me to do about it? I was deliberately picked on and made to carry the can back. Gah! I'm cheased off. I don't mind telling you, I'm jarred off, browned off to the eyebrows. Buttercups!"

Joe Twist said: "Know what to do next time? Pick 'em, see? And go up to the Major, see? Hold the buttercup under his chin—get it?—and say, 'Does oo like butter?'. Do that, George."

George growled, "Buttercups. A buttercup is a dead soppy flower, anyway."

"Oh, I don't know," said Joe. "I was told a story once by a geezer that got it from some bloke that got it somewhere. And I don't mind telling you, this here story only went to show. You didn't ought to run down buttercups, George. He shouldn't ought to, had he, Archie?"

Archie looked up. "P'raps he hadn't, Joe," he said.

"P'raps I hadn't what?" asked George.

"P'raps you hadn't ought to take it out of innocent little buttercups," Joe said. "The geezer that told me this was a man of college education. He put it like this: you imagine there's a bunch of buttercups in a field. See? Or it might be a sandbag, for that matter. Well, a bunny rabbit scoffs these here buttercups. See? Then a she-fox cops the rabbit and eats him up. Get me? Right you are. Then a blessed dog kills this she-fox. Got it? And millions of flies and things eat up this pore old she-fox."

"Well?" George said.

Joe went on: "Rabbit eats buttercup, she-fox eats dog kills she-fox, flies eat she-fox. Got it? Then comes a flock of jolly old swallows. They're flying south. See? They're stoking up for the journey, and they scoff these flies. A swallow enjoys nothing more than a nice nourishing fly. See? And these swallows fly to Africa. Well, they have a roughish time of it. And out of all them swallows, only about one of 'em comes across. And this poor old swallow sits down on the first tree it comes to, to have a rest. See? And a wildcat cops him and eats him. Got me?"

"Now this here wildcat digests his little snack, and goes for a walk, and is met by another wildcat, and they have a bunch and they fight it out. The wildcat that killed the swallow is killed by the other wildcat, and serve him right. He sort of lies there and then there comes a nasty great jackal. This jackal eats the wildcat. Got me? And then this jolly old jackal goes to the river to get himself a drink of water. And then pop! Up comes a great big young crocodile, and snappo! He cops the jackal and eats him. Rabbit eats buttercup——"

"Go on," George said, "if you must go on. We get you on."

"I thank you," replied Joe. He continued: "Well, the crocodile lives about a hundred years, and then dies of old age and sheer weakness. See? And he drifts along and then a lot of little fishes eat the croc. Get me? And then as these little fishes grow up to be bigger fishes, a lot of hungry eels come swimming down, and eat them. See? And these here eels swim hundreds and hundreds of miles out to sea to the place where all the eels meet for purposes of marriages. Nobody's ever seen eels get married, and for my part I don't want to. But these here eels swim back where they came from. Get me? And now comes the dead-hot bit of this here wonderful old story. Rabbit eats buttercup——"

There was a chorus of protests. . . . "Turn it up!" somebody shouted.

"Get on with it!" groaned someone else.

"We follow you, Joey!" from a third.

Joe was quite undisturbed. "Okey and dokey! A man is fishing in a river. He gets his line in a raffle; it's a big old line coming upstream. So he pulls it out, and sells it to a bloke who keeps a barrer. And the bloke jellies this here eel and very good; and puts it on sale at a penny a basinful. Say a penny a basin. Right. Bloke comes along, dead hungry, with o-

ny in his kick. Sees eels; most nourishing fish in the sea. Tosses a penn'orth, scoffs it there and then, and so saves himself from starvation. Get me? And that bloke, feeling better, walks along and gets an idea, and writes down on the back of an old county-court summons: 'once more unto the breach, dear friends, once more.' He's William Shakespeare, and them eels have saved his life! But it was the buttercups that done it, really. And you run down buttercups."

There was a long pause, then George said: "Rabbits don't eat buttercups."

"All right," Joe said, "daisies, then. If it wasn't for them daisies, you wouldn't have no William Shakespeare."

"I don't care if I wouldn't have no William the Conqueror, then!" George said. "I'm not going to carry the can back for no buttercups or daisies either."

Joe shook his head sadly. "You've got no blooming poetry in you, George," he said, "no bloomin' poetry at all. . . ."

## A LECTURE ON MILITARY LAW

GEORGE was talking to the sergeant. "The trouble with this Army, Sarn't, is there's too many bloomin' laws. There's too many rules and too many regulations. That's the trouble with this Army."

The sergeant snorted. "What are you grumbling and rousing about now, you little skivver?"

Joe Twist said: "Don't be hard on him, Sergeant. He has his good points, but they ain't very sharp ones, see? Anyway, what's it all about?"

George explained. "I happen to pick up a live round, and I forget to hand it in. Stuff me gently! You would have thought I'd crowned an officer with the butt of me rifle. Too many laws is the curse of the modern Army."

"Why, you horrible man!" said the sergeant. "Why, you barrack-room lawyer—you, they could practically hang, draw, and quarter you for that! What do you know about laws? Old Joe, here, maybe he knows something—but you—you squippet!"

Joe said: "Yes, and being modest like, I could tell you about millions of laws you never even heard of."

The sergeant took it up. "And that's saying nothing of



offences in relation to the enemy. For example, abandoning your post, shamefully casting away your arms, treacherously holding correspondence with the enemy, or harbouring the enemy, voluntary aiding 'im when at war, knowingly committing a blooming act which increases the success of the perishing forces! Why, you little wretch, they can hang you for them—or they could when I was a boy. Why, you dare to talk to me about laws!"

Then Joe Twist started again. "I believe they could hang you, or shoot you, or boil you in oil for practically anything. Leastways, they could when I was a boy.

"They could bump you off as sweet as you please for any misbehaviour, for leaving your Commanding Officer to his guard, for leaving your guard or post without orders; for forgoing your guard, for bashing a sentinel, for not assisting the Marshal, for intentionally causing false alarms, for neglecting about watchwords or counter-signs, for knocking off your post, or for sleeping or quitting your post when on sentry. If you want laws, I'll give you laws! I'll give you more laws if you're not careful, see! And just cop this, they can hang you for the business for desertion, for sloshing a superior officer, for execution of his office, and for disobeying a lawful command. So don't go gettin' none o' them ideas, get me?"

"And are you aware," the sergeant said, "that in with that cartridge, you are practically assisting or harbouring the enemy?"

Joe went on, "Do you realize that you are imperilling the success of the Forces? Does it occur to you that you are practically knocking-off supplies? Do you realize that, in a matter of speaking, there are about three death sentences hanging over you? 'Strewth, and you tryin' to be a nitwit of wisdom!"

"Lucky for you they can't execute you quite so fast these days," the sergeant said.

"No," continued Joe, "but I tell you, they can put you in for about a hundred years for little things like leaving the post without orders, getting yourself took prisoner of war through carelessness or disobedience, spreading alarm and despondency, violence, fraudulent enlistment, embezzlement, and allowing a prisoner to escape."

The sergeant said: "Or they can lock you up for helping a bloke to desert, for malingering or for aggravating disease, alone for fraud, ill-treating your horse——"

George interrupted: "I ain't got no horse!"

"Quiet!" roared the sergeant. "Making false reports, false accusations, or false statements to get leave. Oh, what a horrible little man you are! Talking to me about laws. I know a million they can shove you in the cooler for."

Joe leaned forward, one long finger jabbing at George. "And do you know, if they chuck you out of the Army, and you're mug enough to try to get back—and blokes like you do—it's illegal enlistment and a crime. My lad, you've just been using disloyal words. You can go inside for that, the same as you can for fighting a duel, attempting suicide, or for any act to the prejudice of good order and military discipline. They can shove you in the moosh for contempt of court, for refusing to pay your bill in a pub, or for damaging public property."

"And I suppose you call yourself a soldier?" the sergeant added. "Why, that's practically a crime—falsely impersonating a man belonging to the Forces. And you dare to talk to me about there being too many laws. I'm just warning you, once and for all, don't you give me none of that stuff or you'll regret it to the longest day you live."

"So, you see what laws there are, don't you, George?" Joe said.

George replied: "That's just what I'm saying, there's too many laws."

"Well, what's the matter with laws, anyway?" the sergeant asked.

"The Army's getting to be just as bad as Civvy Street, if you ask me," George said.

Joe wagged his finger. "Now, that's the sort o' talk that lands blokes like you in the jug for criminal slander, see! Oh, well, you can't say you haven't been warned."

## JOE TWIST ON THE USE OF MINCE PIES

THE other day I comes up against old George looking—well, looking like his old sweet self.

"What's biting you, George?" I said.

"How d'you mean, what's biting me?" he said, back.

"Looking so miserable," I said, "like—like as if they'd just served you with a dehydrated pint."

"It's this blasted monotony—it's killing me, Joe," he said.

"Nothing to do and nothing to see 'cept a lot o' grass stuff."

"Geezers grouse about the monotony of things," I "geezer do. Nothing to do—nothing to see. Just grass, say. Mince pies have they, but they see not! Why, there always something to see if you watch out and use your eyes. There was a lovely sunrise this morning—pink with white all round it—pretty as a sliced ham."

Get it? But poor old George didn't notice it. What a lovely sky that was! And when the sun came up it was as if a great big egg'd been cracked over it—a new-laid egg.

"Look," I said to old George, "last leave I got talking to a kid just back from Libya. I bought 'im a pint of arms-and-ammunition—which is what I call beer nowadays, because it's got no bottom to it—follow me?—and I said to this geezer, I said, 'Blimey, cock your eye, wish I'd been there with you,' I said; 'you must have had some real adventures before you was sent back.'"

"He said, 'Adventures? I should just about say I did have some adventures!'"

"I said, 'Was you wounded?'"

"'Yes,' he said, and showed me a little mark on his forehead. 'Bullet went clean through.'"

"'How'd it happen?' I asked."

"And he said: 'Some Jerry went an' shot me!' Then he went on: 'Adventures! I certainly see something of the war in that journey, pal! Why, you'd never believe what happened at Durban.'"

"'Oh,' I said, 'what happened at Durban?'"

"'A mystery,' he said. 'Work it out for yourself. Look at these three rashers of bacon, three fried eggs, a heap o' fried spuds, a lump of ice cream as big as your 'ead, a bowl o' lemonade, and a bunch of oranges and grapes galore. Got it?'"

"'Yes,' I said."

"'Eightpence,' he said."

"'Smashing!' I said. 'But go on about the fighting.'"

"So he said: 'At night it gets dark, same as round here. We done some night fighting and a bit of bayonet work . . . and when we got to Durban, believe me or believe me not, there was bananas—'"

"'Stick to them bay'nets,' I said. 'What else happened to you?'"

"'I got shot in the leg,' he said. 'I had a bit of a hand-and-a-half bundle with two whacking great Jerries on a patrol, but I

'em both in. And when I got to Durban, an officer's took me about in a great big car.'

Many tanks?" I asked him.

And this geezer said: "They wouldn't let you thank 'em in in. As soon as you opened your mouth to say "thanks", lled it up with bacon and eggs and pineapples and fags and nd words."

I mean tanks in the desert," I said.

Oh, *them!* he said. 'Tanks! Oh, bags o' *them!* We t *them* things all day long. . . . I was treated like a king in an.

Once a coloured feller saluted me," he said. 'You'd rprised how many coloured fellers there are in Africa.

I be surprised how different they look from white fellers.' 'So, I said, a bit disappointed—get it? I said: 'So that's u seen in Libya and thereabout?'

And he said: "The weather was hot, mind you."

'And how did you like the desert?' I asked him.

He said, 'I don't mind telling you, between you and me, that s definitely sandy all over. At Freetown, where we stopped e way back, you can get a chicken for about a bob But ne Durban.'

'Win any medals?' I asked, more in sarcasm than anything —get it?

And this kite says: 'I'm told I'm recommended for one.'

I said: 'What for?'

He said: 'Oh, I mixed it a bit with some Jerries'—After e rashers, three eggs, heaps o' spuds, bowl o' lemonade, lump e cream, grapes and oranges *ad lib.*—eightpence!'

'I said: 'So you had a warmish time in the desert, chum?'

'And he said—as if I was talking about something quite le the point: 'Desert? Oh, that! That was nothing.'

'And there you have it," I said to George. "I've seen books inches thick written about some geezer's childhood days.

There was a bloke that had gone and lived through enough ll a dozen books, and all he could talk about was rashers and s at Durban. Another time I saw a crowd o' men listening

a bloke telling a story that lasted two hours and sounded like siege of Sebastopol; and he was simply telling 'em about how ebody stole his geraniums. And this bloke, hot from the

in the desert, can't find a thing to say! Get what I mean, orge?" I said. "Some people never seem to bother to keep ir mince pies open. See? And I lay you three to one that

: o' these days, some pip-squeaking geezer in thick glasses and

a gammy leg, that spent all his life in the country somewhere, go and write a book all about the horrors of war in the desert—and this geezer that got shot there, he'll read it and shudder from head to foot, and say, 'Blimey, what a smashing story!'"

"It takes all sorts, don't it," I said—"to make a world, I mean. But old George—well, even after all that, old George how didn't see it. Ah, well, so long!"

## THE ARMY

Mr. Churchill has bought us our guns,  
And Lord Woolton's presented our buns,  
Our trousers and blouses  
And little tin houses.  
Are provided by K. Wood and Sons.

To get in you have *nothing* to pay!  
And they don't ask how long you will stay.  
So welcome you're made  
That I'm really afraid  
It's *most* difficult getting away!

A. D.

## "THE EXPERT TALKS"

by Michael Powell

The well-known Film Director

I AM an expert in an art-form which is controlled by business men. Poets, painters, authors, designers, craftsmen of all kinds, some of the highest-paid craftsmen in the world, use it as their medium of expression; and the result of their labours is packed in cans and distributed to the public, with the same efficiency and impersonal standards of excellence as the distribution of all other canned goods; and this efficient and regular distribution implies an occasional monotony of thought, ideas, morals, ethical standards, and ordinary downright drama in films, which

could never tolerate in the theatre, in books, music, painting, or the radio. For this tolerance I thank you; and I speak (without their leave) for all the artists and craftsmen who are fellow workers with me in making films.

I have been working in films for most of my working life—first in France, then in England. There are many departments in a film studio and I've worked in nearly all of them. I had the chance to start in an independent studio where one film was being made at a time. It was a big film, made by Rex Ingram, and the story was *Mare Nostrum*, by Blasco Ibanez.

All the men and women at work on it were the picked craftsmen of their day and of all nationalities. I learnt standards from them that I have never forgotten, and I learnt to swear in all the foreign languages. The bosses were Americans, which meant that when they asked of a man was that he should be the best of his craft available—and they paid well and they hired and fired quick. I was fired the second day.

But I stuck around until they hired me again and, with intervals, I've stuck around ever since.

In those days sound had built no barriers. All the greatest men in Europe were interested in films, as an art-form, and not simply for the money in them. That was to come later in the next years. Artists are human, they like the comforts and luxuries and fame which commercial success brings, but these are not the primary urges which compel them to act and write and paint and compose. So it was in silent films in 1925; making money was not our primary urge; and I have never forgotten that, too.

The primary urge for any creative artist is the absolute necessity to express himself in a chosen medium; and this same urge possesses the men who, like myself, have grown up, mentally and physically, in this complex, exciting art-form which is known, significantly, as the Film Industry.

Imagine a Painting Industry, or a Poetry Industry, or even a Theatre Industry.

There lies one key to great films; only excellent craftsmen under the leadership of creative artists can produce great results; another key lies in production costs. One big film may cost enough to endow a National Theatre. Financially, this can be sound; artistically and morally it is mad. Production must cost less, much less. It must go down to a quarter of the present production cost. And that brings me to the public, to you who pay to keep us making films.

You may be saying that you don't want great films, comfortable mediocrity is just your cup of tea, that you see the pictures once or twice or three times a week, or a month a year, and that you go to be entertained and you usually are, and that's all you want and ever will want. Well, if you say that, you're a liar. Because, if it was true, you'd be dead. You are a human being, a live man or woman, and it's not possible for you to be satisfied with a dead level of any experience than it is for you to accept perfection in anything—a vegetable, or mineral. Your demand stimulates film production now; your demand for fewer and better films, for special cinemas showing specialized films, for re-issues of old favorites for children's cinemas in every important town, for Sunday matinees of cinemas, for the abolishment of double-feature programmes, for the continuance after the war of Government subsidized short films, for long runs of great films in the big cities so that everyone has a chance to see them, for a co-operation between the public and the producer—your demand for these rudimentary things will stimulate change and improve films in the future; and who will be the gainers? We, who make the films, and you who pay for them.

I was giving a talk on films a little while ago to recruits in the R.A.F. I said: "Our two professions are similar in two important particulars; it is twenty-five years since they both picked up after extensive and peculiar growing-pains; and each, produced, by trial and error, its own technicians. You in the R.A.F. and we in the film production are specialists in the sense of the word. But at that point we part company. Your profession is the greatest single factor in the future of this modern world; mine is only potentially one of the greatest."

Some years ago a very old, very wise, very powerful Englishman was quoted publicly, saying: "I know nothing about the film world, I want to know nothing about the film world, and I hope I never shall." He's older now, and I hope he's wiser. But the important thing is, not that he should know what he's talking about, but that we who are experts in film-making should know. We hold in our hands the most vital, direct and popular medium of entertainment, education and instruction that has ever been invented; at a time when the world has a giant's task for all three things. We remember that our films are ambassadors to other countries, and we remember what harm a bad ambassador can do, and what good a good one.

## A LAUGH WITH TED RAY

I WENT into a barber's shop today. There was a sign on the wall. It said: "Shaving: a shilling and one-and-six." I said to the barber: "What's the difference between the shilling and the one-and-six shave?" He said: "With the one-and-six shave you get bandages."

NORMAN LONG TELLS OF  
"THE THREE WISHES"

In words by Robert Rutherford

ONCE upon a time a poor, tired woman sat nodding by the fire. The children were all in bed, the ironing was done, the mending was finished, and her husband's supper lay all ready on the table. Suddenly the light guttered and went out. "Well, I'm bothered," she said, "there goes another bob. But I'll sit here by the fire for a minute, like Cinderella, although who ever heard of a fairy godmother coming to a woman of fifty, with six kids and a husband on munitions?"

"Now that's just where you're wrong," said a little tiny tinkling voice by her side, and the poor woman rubbed her eyes, for there standing on the lid of the teapot was a small and most beautiful fairy. "Now listen to me, Mrs. Jenkinson," said the fairy, "I know all about you, and all about the hard and weary work you do, morning till night, running your home, tending your children, and keeping your husband fed and sweet-tempered while he gets on with the big job. Yes, I know all about you, and I'm going to give you a reward. I will grant you three wishes, and your three wishes shall come true as sure as I'm not standing here." And she vanished.

"Well, I'm bothered! Three wishes!" said the poor woman. "Now whatever shall I wish for? I know, for one thing, I'll have an orange." And there, lying in her lap, was a fine, large, shiny orange. "Well, I'm bothered!" she said again. "Now what shall I have for my next? Why, of course, I know. A new-laid egg." Beside the orange lay as nice a new-laid egg as ever came out of the factory. "Well, I'm bothered," she said once more,



for she was a woman of few words, "now what shall I have for my last wish? I know, I'll have . . ."

But just at that moment her husband came in and said: "Hullo, what's all this? You sitting there with no light, nursing an orange and an egg. Crikey! Where did you get them?" So his wife told him of her fairy visitor and of the three wishes.

"Good heavens, woman," he shouted, "you've got three wishes, and mean to say you frittered away two of 'em on an orange and an egg. A tuppenny-ha'penny egg and a mouldy orange?"

"Yes, Jim," said the poor woman. "I'm sorry. Perhaps I was a bit thoughtless. I tell you what. You have the third wish for yourself. You're a better scholar than I am."

"I should say so," said her husband. "Lucky thing I came in time. An egg and a norange! I hope they stick in yer throat and choke yer. Blimey! There goes me third wish!"

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## TALKING OF SNOOKER

*by Joe Davis*

### World Snooker Champion and British Billiards Champion

It is easier to demonstrate how to play snooker than to talk about it. But snooker has its amusing side and its amusing incidents, so let's talk about that.

I've come across some funny incidents in travelling about the country on what they'd call my lawful occasions. There was one time when I went up to Scotland to play an exhibition match at quite a small town. There was only one hotel in the place, so I checked in there. I had some time to pass away and it was a wet day, so I asked the host if there was a billiard table in the hotel. "Oh yes," he said, "there's one in the loft over the stable, but I'm afraid it isn't used much." Well, he asked me if I'd let myself in and gave me the keys. "Be sure you turn out the lights and lock up when you've finished," he said.

I went up to the loft—the table was pretty bad, but it passed the time away until I had to go for the exhibition match.



JOE DAVIS.  
WORLD'S CHAMPION SNOOKER PLAYER

Exactly two years later I had to go to the same town to give another exhibition, and of course I had to go to the same hotel. The inn-keeper looked hard at me for a minute or two, and then he said, "Haven't I seen you before?"

"That's right," I said, "I stayed here two years ago."

"Play billiards, don't you?" he said.

"Yes," I replied. "I'm Joe Davis."

"Went up into the loft to practise, didn't you, last time you were here?" he went on.

"Yes," I said, "I did."

"Well," he said, "I went up to the loft to the billiard-room this morning, and do you know you left the lights on?"

Another time I was staying in a small hotel and just put my head into the billiard-room to see what the table looked like. One of the other guests was in there and he looked up and saw me.

"What about a game?" he said.

I walked over to the table. It was a pretty gruesome sight. Then I looked at the balls.

"Good lord," I said, "we couldn't play with these balls. That one's cracked, and this one's chipped. The spot ball is the only one that's any good."

"All right," said the other fellow, "we'll make it even. You have the spot ball, the good one, and I'll have the cue with the tip on!"

Talking of tips, there are one or two points worth putting on paper which can help the average player. First of all, if you want to be really good, you'll have to put in about the same amount of practice as I have done—that is to say, about eight hours a day for fifteen years.

But as that is rather much for most people, the best thing to do is to practise as much as you can and get confidence. Remember to stand firm for your shot, and keep your head and body still when you are making your stroke. Keep your eye on the object ball, not on the pocket or the ball you are going to strike. And don't use side until you're a reasonably good player.

I suppose it is natural that people should expect me to be able to tell them how to play the game of snooker. I've been snooker champion fourteen times and held it since 1927. But I was nearly beaten by my brother Fred in 1940, the last championship we played together.

Yes, he certainly gave me a fright in that affair. He held

the record for a break in a world championship, by the way—113. But I'm glad to be able to say I still hold the official world record for a break in any snooker game, a break of 138. It's rather curious that that figure, 138, is also exactly the number of breaks in a century or more that I've made in first-class snooker, up to the time of writing.

Here's another yarn that has just come into my mind. I had just won a match and was feeling rather tired, and there was a fellow hanging about who would keep pestering me to give him a game. I didn't want to play any more, but he'd had a few drinks and kept nagging away.

At last he said, "I'm willing to lay a fiver on the game."

I explained that I still didn't want to play.

"Oh, come on," he said. "After all, a fiver is a fiver."

Well, he kept at it, so at last I thought the quickest way of getting rid of him would be to give him his game. I asked the marker to set up the balls.

It was soon over. In fact, it only took about six or seven minutes. He potted one ball only, the green, when we came to the colours. The final score was 126-3.

"There you are," I said, "and I hope you're satisfied. At any rate, I can say I'm a fiver better off than I was."

"Thank you very much," he replied. "I enjoyed that. And I tell you, I'm a fiver better off too!"

"A fiver better off?" I said. "How's that? You've lost."

"It's like this," he said, putting his cue in the rack and taking out his cigarette-case. "I bet a fellow a tenner this morning that I'd come here and play you. Well, I've won my tenner; you've had a fiver, and that leaves me with a fiver profit. What do you say?"

I won't tell you what I said!

Talking of record breaks, I once made a break that in some ways I consider was even better than my world's record of 138. It was an occasion when I broke and my opponent didn't get a single shot. I took the lot for a score of 134.

The funny thing was that someone turned to him and said: "Well, you didn't play so well in that game!"—which seemed a bit hard!

But he was a sport. He said: "Let's have another game, only this time you'd better give me a bit of a start."

"I don't mind that," I answered. "The problem is what to give you—I've never seen you play!"

Now here are a couple of little puzzles for you—the Editor

tells me that he'll put the answers in the appendix of the book.\*

First of all, how many legs has a billiard table? Think carefully.

Here's the second one: lots of players think the maximum break at snooker is 147—15 reds, 15 blacks, and then the colour—147 in all. But it can be 155. How?

And finally, that old classic catch question: What does a billiard ball do when it stops rolling?

Now don't look up the answers straight away. See if you can work them out for yourself.

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## FROM A BROADCAST BY CARYLL AND MUNDY

"I ONCE recited to over five hundred men for over an hour and not one man left the building."

"I know, and the prison governor thanked you."

"I'm still going to recite now;

"I wish I were a little egg,  
As bad as bad could be.  
I'd stay up in my little nest  
Away up in a tree.  
And when a naughty girl like you  
Came jumping round with glee,  
I'd burst my naughty little self  
And sprinkle you with me."

"Oh, shut up—you half-wit!"

"How dare you call me a half-wit?"

"Sorry, I exaggerated. You want twice the brains you have to be a half-wit. That reminds me—I saw your father last night."

"What do you mean? He's not a half-wit!"

"He's not even a nit-wit. I left him in Leicester Square beside that statue of Cupid—you know, the one that squirts water out of its mouth. He was slapping it on the back saying, 'Good boy, bring it up!'"

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\*See p. 178.

## PUSHPENNY

*An old game re-hashed by Howard Thomas*

PUSHPENNY is an old game which will probably be fairly new to most people. It's a great game in the North of England, and all you need is twopence-halfpenny and four pins. It's really a sort of North-Country version of "Shove Ha'penny". Both games are played with coins on a board.

Pushpenny can be compared to a game of football played with two pennies and a halfpenny. The halfpenny is the ball and one of the pennies is your team, the penny you play with. The other penny is the opposing team, the penny your opponent plays with.

First of all you choose your pitch. All you need is a small wooden board in the shape of a football pitch. An ordinary table is perfect, so long as it's got a smooth top. But not so smooth that your missus objects to your scraping off her beautifully polished surface. At each end of the pitch you erect goalposts. That is to say, at each end you have two pins. Stand them up just like goalposts with the distance between them a little wider than a penny.

Well, there's your pitch all set. Now you line up your teams. Imagine that there is a centre line and put the ball-halfpenny in the centre of the table. Line up your two players (your two pennies). Your penny is between the ball and your goal, the other chap's penny is between the ball and *his* goal.

All you have to do now is to toss up for the kick-off and the one who wins has the first push. The object of the game is to score goals with the halfpenny. You have to hit the halfpenny with your penny, letting your penny run free after you have pushed it. You can propel your penny either by using your thumb, or by using a pusher. The pusher can be a penholder or a small ruler. Anything which is easy to get hold of and which has a flat edge will do, so long as you can give the penny a clean hit. With your penny you can either hit the halfpenny or position yourself behind it. One thing you must not do is to hit your opponent's penny unless you have touched the ball first. If you hit your opponent's penny first it becomes foul, and he gets two pushes in succession. Normally, of course, you take alternate turns. First you hit your penny, then he hits his penny.

Pushpenny is played very much to the rules of football.

For example, if you have a shot and miss the goal and the ball goes over the goal line it is a goal-kick for the other player. He puts his penny and the halfpenny at his goalmouth. Then he pushes the ball down the field with his penny. In the meantime, you have stationed your penny there in a defensive position. On the other hand, if you have a shot and the ball goes behind the goal-line, after glancing off the other player's penny, you get a corner kick. To take a corner kick your opponent first puts his penny in a defensive position in his goalmouth. Then you place your penny in what you believe to be a scoring position. The halfpenny is placed at the corner flag. You then have two pushes. With the first one you shoot the halfpenny into the goalmouth, if possible in a dead line between your coin and the goal, then with your second shot you try to score by hitting the halfpenny through the goalposts with your penny.

I think the only other thing left to explain is a ball that goes out of touch. The procedure is the same as with a corner kick. If the ball goes out of touch off your opponent you place the penny at the edge of the table where it went off, then you have two pushes. With one you send the halfpenny down the field towards the other player's goal, with your second shot you hit your penny and try to shoot the halfpenny between the goalposts.

Pushpenny is a much easier game to play than to explain, and there is no reason at all why you should not make your own rules. But pushpenny certainly has much of the fun and excitement of football, and there can be a great deal of skill in it. If you are in the Forces and you have one or two North-Country chaps in your unit they will show you how the game is played. Perhaps you can organize a competition among yourselves. You usually play a three-goal game, that is, the best out of three goals.

Try it—you'll find it's great fun.

## A STORY FROM MAX BACON

I WOULD like to tell you a story about a couple of friends of mine who opened a Sangwich Shop, and they had a notice up on a wall which says, "We serve any kind of Sangwiches here". So one day when dere is a shop full customers, comes in de geeze what owns de shop over de road, points to de sign, and says: "Iss diss notice right?"

So my friend says, "Yes."

He says, "You sell any kind sangwiches?"

So my friend says, "Yes."

"Vell," said de fellow, "give me please an elephant sangch."

So my pal says, "I lack you pardon?"

"Give me please an elephant sangwich," he repeats.

So my pal says, "Wait a minute. I'll have to go and husk ne partner." So he goes into de other room and says, "Mick," says, "ve're cooked. Comes in de geezer from over de road, ere's a shop full customers, and vat d'you think he husks for?"

"What?" says Mick. (You see, he vas a Cambridge boy.)

"He husks for an elephant sangwich," he says.

So Mick says, "Leave it to me. I like diss customers."

So he goes out in de shop and says, "Excuse me, sir, you husk y partner for a sangwich?"

So the udder fellow says, "Yes."

"What kind sangwich you vant?" he says.

"I vant an elephant sangwich."

"An elephant sangwich—h'mm," says Mick. "What make Indian or Ethiopian?"

"Ats makes no difference," says de other geezer.

"Vell, how many sangwiches you vant?" asks Mick.

"I just want please one sangwich."

"Look," says Mick, turning round to de customers, "for one ngwich he expects I shall cut up a whole elephant!"

## "THE EXPERT TALKS"

by Julian Phipps—*The well-known Newspaper Cartoonist*

am afraid I'm going to break the Trade Union rules with what am going to say. The truth is that there's no mystery in drawing, it's more a matter of practice than of genius. It's not a kind of black-and-white magic, and, in fact, technique with pencil or brush is no more formidable than skill with a golf-club. About the only difference is that with the golf club you remove bits of the landscape and with the pencil and brush you put them in. Anybody can become sufficiently competent to amuse



himself, even if nobody else, given enough persistence—pencils. You often hear the remark, "Ooo, it must be wonderful to be able to draw—I couldn't do it in a thousand years." Of course, that defeatist attitude is highly convenient for us who make a living at it—it keeps the market nice and small. My friend, you, I don't promise you can become a top-flight artist unless you've got natural artistic "oomph". But you'll be surprised at what you can do if you try.

I'm afraid I can't pose as the man who, after years of heartbreak, triumphed over flint-hearted editors, as a good many others actually do. I was fairly lucky. Ever since I was a child I have drawn, in the words of the popular song, all over the place; but I'd more or less given it up seriously, when a friend of mine decanted me into an agent's office one day. The agent practically held his nose while he looked at my stuff. "What profession are you thinking of following—seriously?" he asked.

"Law," I replied.

"Then you stick to that," was his verdict.

But my friend, himself a newspaper artist, refused to allow me to crawl away and die, and introduced me to the fearless editor of an evening newspaper. To my amazement, he gave me an article to illustrate. It's astonishing how a few cuttings of your stuff in a big paper act as a passport. Then a big national newspaper noticed some of my cartoons in a college magazine and suggested I did a series. That was twelve years ago—I'm still with that paper. As I said, I was lucky; but it's a pity that practically all commercial artists and cartoonists could have papered a room with "editors' regrets" at the start. You've got to face disappointments. If you're going to take up art as a career, you're almost certain to have to start as a free-lancer, and to any of you who have already sold a little work, I'd say for heaven's sake go straight to a good agent and let him buy from you. He will be worth much more than his percentage, because he knows the market. You see, you might be a budding Bateman, but if you go on bunging in chorus-girl jokes to *Boys' Own Paper* you won't get far.

I suppose the most difficult part of cartoon work, once your technique is presentable, is the Idea. In fact, for some of the most successful artists it's insuperable—so they employ Ideas men and pay them well. Personally, I don't use an Ideas man. I find it cheaper to buy aspirin to stop the headaches.

The best ideas come from some scene or some person you actually encounter. But you can't safely leave it to this pur-

vidential source of supply. The best synthetic method rather like one of those round games. Write down a word—"barrel-organ". That suggests "monkey". "Monkey" suggests "nuts". "Nuts" suggest—well, "Oliver Wakefield", you like. Write 'em all down till you've got a long list of words. Then go over the list and think around any of the more promising words. You practically can't help getting some gag, even if it 't a world beater.

You've always got to keep your eye open for topical things while they're still hot. For instance, when the Home Guard was formed, a positive rash of Home Guard cartoons broke out.

And now a word to those who have at present no great gift of drawing, but just feel they'd like to get some fun out of it. My advice is, don't start on caricatures. It's very satisfying to get the sergeant's nose just right, but you're apt to concentrate much on getting the likeness that your line is messy and without quality. What you want first is a strong controlled line and the best way to do that is to draw things you see around you. Draw people if you like, but in the sense of *figures*, not actual identifiable persons. And don't make a fetish of *detail*. The present-day technique in humorous art is loose and free, thanks to the influence of the Americans. So if you ever hope to sell your work don't put in every hair on the dog. Just get used to the *feel* of the pencil in your hand, and you'll find your line is becoming stronger and more flexible every day.

Once your pencil drawing gets firm, you can go on to the more difficult technique of pen and Indian ink, or brush and black ink, as you prefer. Personally, I use the brush, but it's a matter of choice. Don't bother with too much fine shading—for outlines and masses. And remember this, the beauty of drawing is that all you need is a pencil and paper. It's better in this respect than other hobbies like lion-taming or double-bass playing. Always carry a small notebook with plain paper and pencil around with you, and make rough notes of anything that catches your eye. And, of course, keep on bunging your stuff to your regimental magazines. It's enormous fun, especially if you improve.

Anyway, start drawing for fun; draw whenever you have an idle moment; draw on anything and with anything, and gradually those difficulties which now seem so baffling will vanish and your first publication will bring you the biggest kick of your

## RHYMING SLANG

*by Dick Francis*

If some of you have got the collecting bug, and fancy collecting something a bit different, here's an idea for you—try collecting rhyming slang, the real genuine article. What is it? We'll tell you. It's a sort of queer lingo that the good old Cockney used to use, and many of them still do use. In this lingo one word is expressed, or one phrase is expressed by using another which rhymes with it. Some of these expressions have become quite common, and you'll soon see what I mean by rhyming slang if I recall one or two of them for you. Take, for instance, the expression "Tit-for-tat", which everyone knows as meaning "that". That's rhyming slang. "Bees and honey" for "money" is another. You see the sort of thing?

But the real Cockney's rhyming slang contains hundreds of such expressions, each one recognized and recognizable from one point of view collectable. Here's an example of a sentence you might hear which is almost entirely rhyming slang.

"I went up the apple and pears, opened the Rory O'More, put my Scotch on the Cain and Abel, took off my daisy roots and my Plymouth Rocks, removed my round the 'ouses, put my Uncle Ned on the weeping willow, and ploughed the deep all the flyin' ite."

To the uninitiated that probably wouldn't mean a thing, but to the collector of rhyming slang it's perfectly clear. Here's what the Cockney would mean:

"I went up the stairs (apple and pears), opened the door (Rory O'More), put my watch on the table (Scotch on the Cain and Abel), took off my boots (Daisy roots), and my socks (Plymouth Rocks), removed my trousers (round the 'ouses), put my head on the pillow (Uncle Ned on the weeping willow), and went to sleep (ploughed the deep) all the night (all the flyin' ite)."

It's a fascinating sort of slang, and as you begin to pick up the different phrases you find that you can almost talk in a code which is intelligible only to anyone who understands the slang.

But the real Cockney often makes it much more difficult by dropping the word which rhymes. In the sentence above, for example, he would not say "daisy roots" for "boots". He would drop the rhyming word and simply talk about his "daisies". Or

Cockney might want a glass of rum. In rhyming slang that would be a glass of finger and thumb. But when he went into the pub (rub-a-dub) he'd ask for a glass of finger. And the surprising thing is he'd be understood.

When I first went on the stage, rhyming slang was a usual way of speaking among actors, and we all knew it. You don't hear so much of it now, but, as I say, lots of real Cockneys still speak it, and it's fascinating trying to add to your collection of phrases.

Now here's a bit of rhyming slang for you to try translating. See what you can make of it.

"I went up to the Ave Maria, warmed my Germans, and tasted my plates."\*

Got it? Well, if the effort makes your head go round, the best thing to do is to go and have a glass of I'm so.

A glass of what? A glass of I'm so—I'm so frisky—whisky. Easy, isn't it?

### SLANG SONG

It seems this war is different  
From wars of yesteryear,  
Its differences including  
The kind of slang you hear.

When new to the Artillery  
I asked, "Who is this man  
Who seems to spend his whole darned life  
In taking back a can?"

But now I know "can-taking"  
Is just an army name  
For (Yankee) *holding baby*  
Or (English) *taking blame*.

When I was raw, I heard a phrase  
That in my mind has stuck:  
It sounded so peculiar:  
It was "pneumonia truck".

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\* For translation of the sentence above, see Appendix, p. 178.



NORMAN LONG.  
"A SMILE, A SONG, AND A PIANO"  
(See "The Three Wishes", page 117)

This means (as I have cause to know)  
 An open motor lorry,  
 Sans hood, sans windscreen worth the name,  
 In short, an M.O.'s worry.

Light lorries if discreetly closed  
 By all concealing hoods,  
 Are known as "love trucks" when their passengers  
 are deemed the goods.

"Get crackin' " means "get started",  
 "Get stokin' ", the same—at meals,  
 While "fit" just means one is *ready*  
 No reference to how one feels.

Another bit of Army slang  
 That puzzles the new raw ranker  
 Is the name for a rumour, or a *tall one*:  
 In Ack-Ack we call it *flanker*.

When something's *agreed* or *popular*  
 As "favourite" it is known  
 And so you see in this war of ours  
 We've a language all our own.

No book of reference shows it,  
 (Not even the *Army List*)  
 But it simplifies straight speaking  
 To give old words a twist.

BOMBARDIER ALEC E. DAVIS.

## A COUPLE OF YARNS FROM ARTHUR RISCOE

and the one about the very pukka officer in the Home  
 and looking out to sea? Suddenly he said: "Good lord,  
 moral—take this down, will you? Enemy force approach-  
 Five hundred boats escorted by destroyers, sixty E-boats,  
 battleships—one without a funnel—five hundred bombers  
 a thousand fighters. Send that message to headquarters,

will you?" The corporal went to the field-telephone, and said "That you, 'Arry? Well, they're 'ere. Ring the ruddy bells!"

And there's the one about the two kangaroos—a father and a mother with a baby kangaroo in her pouch. The mother was blaming the father because the baby was a weakling, when she hops the baby from the pouch. The father kangaroo throws out his chest and says, "There you are—he's no weakling. He's as lively as a cricket!" "It was nothing to do with him," said the mother, "I've got hiccups."

## TIPS FROM THE TOUCHLINE Inside Dope on Soccer

*by F. N. S. Creek*

(THE FAMOUS CORINTHIAN FOOTBALLER AND COACH)

### 1 *Getting Ready for Soccer*

The month before the Soccer season really starts is a very busy time for trainers and coaches. Their main job is to get their men fit for the strenuous games ahead, and in nine cases out of ten the first task will be to knock off the extra pound of fat accumulated during the summer months. Well, so far fellows in the Forces are concerned, that part of the training is probably unnecessary. At any rate, I'm going to assume there is no need for me to say to you, "Come on, chaps! Off with your sweaters, and trot half a dozen laps round the soccer pitch before we get down to serious work." What probably interests you much more is to know just what this serious work really is, and to what extent it can be adapted to your needs in some out-of-the-way corner of the country.

First of all, you must realize that soccer places a great strain on your thigh muscles, and they are probably in for a good deal of rough usage. Consequently, it's no use training as if you were a racehorse. What I mean is, your champion sprinter would never dream of pulling up quickly at the end of a race; he slows down gradually in case he tears one of his precious muscles. But you, as a soccer player, have to learn to sprint twelve yards, stop dead, and dash off in an entirely different direction. What is more, your muscles have to be prepared for that almost brutal

treatment, otherwise you'll probably be a "passenger" in your very first game.

One of the best ways of teaching these muscles to become shock-absorbers is to adapt the old "walk-run" exercise. Walk twenty-five yards briskly, then burst into a run for twenty-five yards, stop dead, walk twenty-five yards, and so on. As you become hardened, cut down the twenty-five yards to fifteen, twelve, finally eight yards—spring, stop dead, walk, sprint, stop dead, and so on. You can do it anywhere—indoors or outdoors.

The next stage is to turn quickly at the end of the sprint—left, right, or about turn—and then, finally, finish each burst with a tackle by lunging at an imaginary ball, in this case a dandelion or a tuft of grass. Try not to fall over in any of these exercises; so many average soccer players rush in wholeheartedly to a tackle, miss, sprawl on the ground and take their time to get up again; whereas a good player who misses his tackle immediately spins round and races back in an attempt to rectify his mistake.

I wonder how many of you saw David Jack in action when he was playing for Bolton Wanderers or the Arsenal. It used to be said of him that he once swerved and dribbled past three opponents in succession without actually touching the ball. What happened, of course, was that by wonderful body swerve he caused the would-be tacklers to take their eyes off the ball, which was then allowed to run straight on. Can you swerve like that, wonder? Perhaps you've never tried. If you haven't, go out some time and hammer a corner flag or tall stick hard into the middle of a fairly level bit of ground. Then trot up to it (right up to it, I mean) and when you're within a yard of it, suddenly swerve round it. Next trot slightly to one side of the flag and sprint—or pretend you're going to swerve round it—but at the last moment straighten out and go round the original side. Do it slowly at first, then full out. When you can do this, place more flags at decreasing intervals—say ten yards, eight yards, seven yards, and six yards apart—and race flat out through the lot of them, swerving round one, feinting at another, and so on. This is obviously heavy work for the ankles, so choose a soft bit of ground or a wet day, and if possible make sure that your insteps are firmly laced and your boots properly studded.

A famous continental soccer coach of my acquaintance was once being criticized by some onlookers who didn't believe that his methods would bring about increased accuracy in scoring goals. For answer, he pointed to a small rectangular wooden panel at the end of the long hall in which they were standing,



quietly placed an ordinary soccer ball on the ground in front of him, and from twenty yards' range crashed that ball straight through the panel. Now if I stood with my legs wide apart, wonder if you could kick a ball from ten yards' range straight between my feet? Do I hear you say, "Yes, every time!" Well, don't just say it; go out with a pal this evening and try. Legs wide apart and a stationary ball at ten yards' range. You need a good kick—or a lucky one—if you get half your shots through at first. But don't be disheartened by failure; keep your pants up and your head down. Don't stab or slice the ball, but flick it through with your leg as you would with a cricket bat or a golf club. And keep on practising until you can knock down a cricket stump at ten yards' range more often than not.

After kicking comes passing. Now there's no better way to learn the art of passing than by taking a small ball against a brick wall—I mean taking a small ball *to* the brick wall and dare say that hundreds of first-class footballers learnt the elementary lessons of passing by running alongside a wall and flicking a tennis ball against it. The wall acts as a perfect partner for you and returns the ball at the corresponding angle, so that if you are running parallel to the wall, you can learn the push pass with the inside of your foot and the flick with the outside. Don't worry, the surface of the ground near your wall is a bit uneven; it can run full speed for fifty yards alongside the brick wall without a wobble. Nearest to your battery or balloon, flicking or pushing a small ball every ten yards, you'll be up to international standard on any piece of turf like Wembley Stadium! And I'll go further than that. If you can find a partner in your section who can take the place of that brick wall and return the ball to you in the same manner, you'll *both* be Internationals when this war's

## 2. *Kicking*

Now let's get down to some details. We'll start with the most fundamental branch of the game—kicking.

In addition to the simple straightforward kick which I have already mentioned, there are seven other common ways of kicking a soccer ball: the pivoting kick (used for corner kicks and centres from the wing), the push, the flick, the punt, the volley, the half volley and the lob. That looks rather a formidable list, doesn't it?—but it's only because we use the outside, or inside, or instep of each foot to kick the ball on different occasions. In fact, you see, a soccer player really has six feet, and there are six occasions when he may require all six. It all depends on

you are aiming for—absolute accuracy, or keeping the ball low, or close passing, or lifting the ball over your opponents' heads. If you want accuracy, try out Steve Bloomer's method. Divide an empty goal into half a dozen imaginary spaces, and number each space in your mind from one to six. Place your ball on the edge of the penalty area, nominate your space by calling out, say, "Three", and then try to kick the ball through that space. If there are several of you, make it competitive—or, better still, play it like "round-the-clock" darts. You know the idea; you must kick the ball through number one space before you can go on to number two, and so on. Once you get expert with a stationary ball, try it with a moving one; and, finally, let your opponent nominate both the space and the foot you must kick with. The game then sounds something like this:

"Jones: left foot, space five. Bad luck—no point."

"You next, Smith: right foot, space two. Good shot—one point to your team."

And so on. Got the idea?

In these days when you're allowed to score a goal direct from the corner kick, the best way to practice a pivoting kick is to take as many soccer balls as you can get hold of, and try to drop corners straight into the net. It used to be said that Alec Jackson, who was Scotland's outside right, could regularly do three of these in succession, so there's a standard for you.

Now for volleying. This is almost entirely a matter of keeping your eye on the ball. Just take out a soccer ball this evening and see how many times you can kick it without letting it fall to the ground. I went out the other day and had half a dozen tries, and the best I could do was thirty-three; can you beat that? Have a shot at it, and remember that little taps count just as much as high kicks.

### 3. *Trapping*

Trapping is the art of bringing down a high or a bouncing ball and immediately getting it under control on the ground. The commonest way of trapping is, naturally, by wedging the ball against the ground with the foot; but that assumes that you have managed, as the cricketers say, to get right out to the pitch of the ball. Very often you can't do that, and the ball reaches you knee, chest, or head high. That would make no difference to you; just let your chest or head "give" a little to take the speed and force off the ball, which will then fall to the ground in front of you and there be trapped with the foot. For practice

get a pal to go out with you on to any convenient bit of ground and get him to lob the ball towards you from ten yards' range. To begin with, stand almost stationary, and trap first with the sole of your boot, then with the inside of the foot, and finally with the outside. Then try trapping on the run (same three ways), then trapping and passing in one movement, and lastly, trapping and shooting in one movement. Once you are fairly proficient, mark a short line on the ground and take it in turns—lob, trap, dribble across the line, pick up; lob, trap, dribble, cross, and so on. You'll find it jolly hot work, I assure you; but it's excellent practice. Once you've learnt to trap the ball correctly, the next stage is passing. Now I maintain that almost all the essentials of passing can be learnt from one simple game, walking football. As the name "walking football" implies, no running is allowed, and the goalkeeper may only handle if a goal would otherwise be scored. Try it for yourselves and see how you like it. Take three, four, or at the most five aside, and play it lengthwise in an ordinary penalty area, with two five-yard goals. Whenever the ball goes out of play, it has to be thrown in, so corners and goal kicks all become throw-ins. You'll soon learn all the fundamentals of passing after about ten minutes of walking football, but remember the simple slogan, "When not in possession—move into position". And always pass into the empty space ahead of a colleague, so that he receives the ball going flat out.

#### 4. Heading

I happened to be looking at an old photograph the other day showing a soccer game in progress many years ago. Most of the players were wearing caps, and it was quite obvious that head-work, as we know it today, simply didn't exist. Now heading became a serious branch of soccer about forty years ago, and since then numerous critics have complained from time to time that there is far too much of it in our modern game. I don't agree. Heading gives a fine opportunity for your tall, lumbering, clumsy-footed fellow to beat his more nimble opponent for once, and, after all, we do want everyone to get his fair share of enjoyment out of the game. I don't mean to infer that the little fellow can't head—Hughie Gallacher, that wonderful little Scotsman, used to head dozens of goals, in spite of defenders nearly a foot taller than himself.

But that leads me on to a very important point I want to stress while I'm talking about heading—to be really good, you

must be able to leap high into the air in order to carry out your headwork. So the first stage of practice is bouncing. Here's a surprising statement for you: if you're an average soccer player, I'll bet you can't stand quite upright, hands down by your side, and then bounce eighteen inches into the air. Just make a mark about a foot and a half up the side of a chair in the canteen and try it. No bending of the knees, remember; but you can bounce as many times as you like.

I once heard it said that Charlie Buchan is the only player in the past twenty years who could jump higher than the cross-bar and then head a ball down under it. Whether it's true or not, it's a fine standard to aim at. You can practice by getting the tallest fellow in your section to stand with his clenched fist held high up in front of him while you and your pals run up to him, leap up, and in imagination head his fist down into a goal. And here's a tip for you balloonatics! Get a child's toy balloon, if you can, and head that to a friend across a rope or string held about six feet above the ground. That's the way to start heading, and once you've got the knack you'll easily keep it up a hundred times or more. The next stage is to play volleyball, a kind of football-tennis; you can easily make your own local rules. Heading cricket is another good game for four or five aside on an odd bit of ground. The bowler lobbs the ball on to the head of the batsman, and the fielders try to run him out before he reaches the wicket twenty-two yards away. If the fielding side are able to head the ball twice in succession before it falls to the ground, the batsman is out; three times means the whole side is out. It's good fun if you haven't a full-size soccer pitch.

### *Tackling*

Here are a few tips on the subject of tackling. First of all, I want you to realize that a good tackler may not always get the ball; in fact, it often pays you not to rush in and risk everything on a hearty tackle. I remember once watching a league match with a famous professional soccer-manager, and even he failed to realize that a particular wing half-back, although he seldom seemed to get the better of a tackle, was constantly making his opponent part with the ball, often to a man who was already well marked. What I want you to realize is that compelling your opponent to get rid of the ball is often as valuable as a full-blooded tackle. Another alternative to tackling is intercepting. Varney Cresswell, the old Everton and England full-back, was a master of this art. He seemed to have an uncanny knack

anticipating just where and when a pass was going to be made and time after time he would slip in and, so to speak, tackle a man before ever he got the ball.

But let us assume that an attacker is advancing with the ball at his feet, and it is your job, as a defender, to obtain possession of that ball. What should you do? Well, the first thing is to be on your toes and to keep your eyes on the ball, and *not* on his feet or body. If necessary you can retreat a little, but your job is to wait until he kicks the ball a shade too far and then make a determined tackle. Get the weight of your body behind the effort so that the ball is blocked, your opponent is then automatically dispossessed as he stumbles forward. And if you can do so without committing a foul, combine the tackle with a shoulder-charge so as to throw him farther off his balance.

### 6. *Dribbling*

Dribbling is an artistic and spectacular part of soccer which brings out a player's individuality. No two soccer players dribble alike, and there are few hard and fast rules which can be laid down. It doesn't matter whether you prefer clever ball control, feinting, side-stepping, or any other method of deception so long as you finish up with the ball on the other side of your opponent, you're a good dribbler. Great dribblers like Alex James, David Jack and Billy Walker are born, not made, you know; but wee Alex would be the first to admit that the *average* player can soon make himself into a pretty good dribbler, if only he will concentrate and practice a bit.

Have you ever played "follow-my-leader" while dribbling soccer balls? Any bit of ground, or even a large hut, will do the smaller the available area, in fact, the better the exercise. Or try ramming half a dozen flags or sticks into the ground at various intervals—skittles will do for indoors—then stand a few yards away from the nearest one, throw up your soccer ball, head it, trap it as it comes down, dribble through the sticks and return to your starting-point. Time yourself with a stop-watch and try to knock off a second or two each time. Throw up, head, trap and dribble—got it? And then, if you've got more than one soccer ball, make it competitive by choosing relay teams.

I suppose few of you will have had the opportunity of watching a demonstration of ball-control exercises by Jimmy Hogan, the famous coach and manager of Aston Villa. His methods of teaching dribbling are unique—a complete series of exercises, all getting gradually more and more difficult. Start by gently

tapping the ball forward with the inside of the right foot only, up and down a long room will do to begin with. Repeat with the inside of the left foot. Then use the *outside* of each foot in turn, then inside and outside alternately. Do you see what I mean? That's how Mr. Hogan taught them the art of dribbling on the Continent, and you all know what apt pupils they've been. So "go to it", chaps, and practice! Nurse the ball along with a series of gentle taps, and keep your head and body well over it.

### 7. Throwing-In

One of the most neglected branches of Soccer is throwing-in. Professional footballers spend a considerable amount of time in practising accurate and long throws from the touchline, with the result that they can pretty well rely on a colleague obtaining possession of the ball nine times out of ten. Amateur soccer players, on the other hand, invariably fail to make the fullest use of a throw-in. How many times have you heard an enthusiastic wing-half loudly shout, "Our ball!" when the ball has gone into touch, only to follow up his claim with a feeble throw which goes straight to an opponent? So let's see what we can do to improve our throwing-in.

Well, first of all, we must be *accurate*. No forward wants the ball thrown hard at his chest or tummy; it's hopeless for him to try to bring it down and get it under control when an opponent is standing a foot behind him, prepared for an immediate tackle.

If you must throw it high, aim for his forehead so that he has a chance to head the ball on at once to a colleague. But the correct place to aim when throwing-in is about a yard to the right or left of your colleague; he can then spin round, trap the ball, and dribble away from the crowded area round the touchline as quickly as possible. For long throws, try placing one foot in front of the other, lower the back knee, and bend the whole body back, so that when you suddenly straighten up, the ball is released as if from a catapult. These long throws want to be used with discretion; don't overdo them or advertise them, but keep one-up your sleeve until you get near your opponent's goal-line. Then suddenly produce your best throw and fling the ball right into the penalty-area. The very fact that you have kept it as a "surprise packet" will probably have put your opponents off their guard, and one of your own forwards may get a splendid chance to score a snap goal.

You'll be agreeably surprised to find that a small amount of practice in throwing-in brings with it a big and immediate

improvement. If you haven't very much room for practice, get hold of a couple of soccer balls, and have some "throw-in" relay races! Each pair has to dribble the ball across a line about twenty yards away, pick it up, turn and throw it to Number Two who, in his turn, dribbles to the line, picks it up, and throws to Number Three. But remember to use both hands equally—to use one hand mainly for throwing and the other one mainly for steering constitutes a foul throw.

## DID YOU KNOW

Did you know that in the season 1932-3, Cliff Bastin scored as many as thirty-three goals in League games, every one of them from the outside left? That just emphasizes the value of cutting in, and of wing-to-wing play, doesn't it?

And that in 1922 W. H. Minter, the St. Albans amateur international centre-forward, scored seven goals in succession for his club in a Football Association cup-tie against Dulwich Hamlet. Even so, however, he was on the losing side, for Dulwich won by eight goals to seven. A bit hard on Minter that, eh?

And that Hugh Gallacher, whom I've already mentioned was transferred several times during his playing career, from Airdrieonians to Newcastle United, then to Chelsea and then to Derby County; and in all these moves, the remarkable sum of £20,000 was spent on him. What's more, out of all that money, Gallacher himself got a very small percentage indeed.

Did you know that in 1936, when Aston Villa were at the bottom of the First Division table, they paid out something like £40,000 in transfer fees in about a month for seven players—Griffiths, Cummings, Massie, Hodgson, Phillips, Williams and Palethorpe? Even then, however, they were relegated to the Second Division, so, you see, money doesn't always talk in soccer!

And that Billy Meredith played for Wales in fifty-one International matches, and, what, I think, is even finer, he played for Manchester City in the Football Association Cup Competition in his fiftieth year. That's a record that will outlast our lifetimes, I imagine.

And did you know that starting in the year 1931, Everton did so well in successive seasons that they won first the championship of the Second Division, next the championship of the First

Division, and in the third year the Football Association Cup Final at Wembley? Good steady progress, as the schoolmasters say on their reports!

## ALPHABET ELEVENS

HERE'S an amusing way of passing an hour or two—Alphabet Elevens. Try your hand at making up an eleven with players whose names all begin with some chosen letter of the alphabet. Here are a few examples for you.

The letter "B". There's Bartram or Howard Baker for goal; Beattie and Barkas as full backs; Bushby, Barker or Brown (of Glasgow Rangers) as halves; and Birkett, Charlie Buchan, Bloomer, Bestall and Bastin for forwards. Pretty hot side that, eh?

The letter "C". There's Crozier in goal; Crompton and Cresswell, backs; Crayston, Cullis and Copping, halves; Crooks, Carter, Camsell, Alf Common and Cuncliffe, forwards.

The letter "H". There's Hibbs in goal; Hampson and Hapgood, backs; Hart, Healless and the Rev. K. R. G. Hunt, halves; Hooper, Hall, Hodgson, Herd and Capt. K. E. Hegan, forwards.

The letter "S". There's Sagar in goal; Stuart and Shaw, backs; Septimus Smith, Saddon and Storer, half-backs; Spence, Danny Shee, G. O. Smith, Clem Stephenson and W. H. Smith, forwards.

The letter "W". Tim Williamson in goal; Wadsworth and Wedlock, backs; Wilson, Max Woosnam and Weaver, halves; Worrall, Vic Watson, Vivian Woodward, Billy Walker and Williams, forwards.

The letter "M". Moss in goal, Male and McCracken, full backs; Massie, McCall and Mercer, halves; Matthews, McPhail, McGory, McAlpine and Morton, forwards.

Well, there's half a dozen teams for you. That leaves twenty letters out of the twenty-six in the alphabet. Try your hand at these—and good luck when you come to "X", "Y", and "Z"!



## LAUGHS WITH THE FORCES [10]

SOME Irish labourers were working in Union Street when a main exploded. After the explosion they couldn't find a trace of Pat Murphy. When his wife called, the foreman told her he was gone. "Gone!" says she. "For good?" "Well," the foreman, "he's gone in that direction!"

A/C MICHAEL MOY

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THE RUMOUR

Someone told the bombardier  
Who raised his eyebrows high,  
He went to tell the Sergeant  
With anger in his eye.

The Sergeant looked quite startled  
And paled with wrath or fear.  
He said, "I think the R.S.M.  
'Ad better 'ear this 'ere!"

That regimental man was stirred  
(Though R.S.M.s don't show it),  
But his face turned red as he smarted and said,  
"I'll let the Colonel know it."

The Colonel went to the Brigadier  
But the Brigadier was out,  
So he told the Major-General  
What it was all about.

That gentleman said, "Thank you,"  
And laughed a nasty laugh;  
"This story, word for word," he said,  
"Shall go to the Chief-of-Staff."

The Army Council heard it—  
They said it was a scandal,  
And thought that it was something  
The P.M. ought to handle.

So what the bombardier had heard  
Somewhere in canteen chatter,  
Went through the usual channels  
To become a Cabinet matter.

What they decided is a thing  
I wouldn't dare to write,  
But when the days of peace return  
'Twill surely come to light.

(But what the bombardier *did* hear  
You'll find if you should look  
Among the pages which we call  
The appendix to this book.)\*

B. M.

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## ALL IN A DAY'S WORK

by *Warrant Officer Jim Hay*  
Army Education Corps

THE work of the Army Education Corps takes a man into all sorts of places and brings him up against all sorts of odd situations. Often he is expected to be a cross between a walking encyclopaedia and a Universal Aunt. And, of course, to know the answer to almost every sort of problem. For example:

Paddy was a great big Irishman. One day he came to me with a load of trouble. He was in a real stew. It was the old business of relatives. His wife was evacuated and was living in his brother's home. Somehow or other, they had got on each other's nerves. Only that morning Paddy had received a letter from his wife telling him that there had been a terrific row. He wanted some leave to go home and try to straighten things out. Well, I dropped a word in the right quarter, and Paddy got his leave. But before he set out he came to me in a bigger stew than before. He confessed that he didn't know what he was going to do.

I had a serious talk with Paddy, and then I said jokingly as he went: "If I were you, Paddy, I'd punch my brother's nose and put my wife across my knee."

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\* See page 178.

Two days later Paddy came to see me. He stood at attention, and said, "I did it, sir! I did what you told me!"

"Did what?" I asked.

"Why," said Paddy, "what you told me. I punched my brother on the nose and put my wife across my knee. . . . Now they're all friends and everything in the garden is lovely!"

Pity all problems don't have so simple a solution! But all the same, that was a lesson to me, and I'll never give joking advice again. Cheerio!

### "THE EXPERT TALKS"

*by Lieutenant-Commander R. T. Gould, R.N. (retd.)*

A good many people who don't know any better seem to regard me as an expert on "mysteries"—not detective mysteries or anything of that sort, but queer things of all kinds which have actually happened and are matters of record and historical fact. Personally, I don't like the term "expert"—it always reminds me of the celebrated High Court judge, long ago, who classified all witnesses appearing in law-suits into three main divisions—namely, liars, damned liars and expert witnesses. Still, it's quite true that for more years than I like to remember I've been very keen on collecting and testing information about odd and unusual happenings.

How did I get that way? Well, it's fashionable nowadays to trace everything in one's life back to the influence of something which happened to you when you were very young. In my case, when I was ten, we were staying for the summer in an old house at Haslemere whose library, if you could call it that, was rather like an old-fashioned dentist's waiting-room: it consisted chiefly of bound volumes of old, very old, illustrated papers. And in one of these, dating as far back as 1855, I came across an account of the extraordinary hoofmarks in the snow which were seen over a wide area of Devonshire in February of that year.

They looked as though they might have been made by a donkey, or a pony—but for the fact that they were only about eight inches apart, and formed a single unbroken line something like a hundred miles long, and going over the roofs of houses and haystacks and apparently *through* solid walls. I made up



VIC OLIVER  
(See "My Life Story", page 45)

my mind then and there that when I was O into that mystery, and thirty years later I solve it, but I dug out, and put on record in facts of the case; and I also unearthed an alibi one which happened in 1840 at Kerguelen I Indian Ocean. No satisfactory explanation ever been given.

By then, I'd learned a good deal about such things. I learned it at the Admiralty, out of the Service in the middle of the last war time on half pay I was taken on by the Hydrographical Office of the Admiralty, which is responsible for Admiralty charts and sailing directions, and so my eleven years there I was given a lot of O into which called for a good deal of investigation called "research".

For instance, I had to identify, if possible Columbus called "San Salvador" and where his first landing in the New World in 1492--just over fifty years ago. Geographers have wavered on the question for centuries, and at least *eight* of the B islands have been confidently identified, by some particular as genuine San Salvador. But by going back to the journals of Columbus and his contemporaries, and from them the track of Columbus's ships and so on, it wasn't difficult to show that, in all human probability, "San Salvador" was what is called Watling Is.

That, of course, is the only way to do satisfaction. That is, to go back, wherever possible, to first-hand contemporary documents, and make up your mind on nothing whatever on trust that you may find it to be absolutely wrong; or, more probably, it's

And by the time B's quoted from A, and C's from B, the original statement has been transformed into something of course, almost beyond recognition.

Naturally, it's very disappointing when occasionally found, that what looks like a first-hand mystery is capable of some simple explanation. You've knocked out the exaggerations which have grown round the story in course of time there isn't much left. At first sight, for instance, it's rather distressing to find that the "Iron Mask" worn by the mysterious prisoner of Bastille was actually made of black velvet; or w

as I did, that the *Marie Celeste*, found drifting on the high seas in December 1872 in perfect order and with sail set, but with not a soul aboard, had a boat missing from its stowage in which her crew had obviously left her. But if you go in for investigating mysteries, you're not playing fair, either with yourself or the public, if you shut your eyes to facts; and there are quite a number of mysteries which, after the most thorough investigation, still remain unexplained—and probably always will.

I've only once investigated a mystery on the spot, and not from records. That's a case which caused a lot of talk at the time, in 1933 and 1934—the so-called "Loch Ness Monster". When I went North, I was a sceptic—I thought some well-known sea-creature had somehow made its way into the Loch and hadn't been recognized, simply because it was the first of its kind to get in there. But, on the evidence—and I collected from eye-witnesses enough evidence to hang a dozen men, together with several sketches and photographs—I had to turn that idea down. The "monster" which, by the way, is still in Loch Ness, or at least was a few months ago, is a sea-creature, and a large one (at least fifty feet long), but it's not a well-known one. In fact, such creatures aren't at present accepted by science at all, though they will be one day, just as the giant squid has been within the last fifty years.

It's one of those discredited, but perfectly real creatures called "sea-serpents", for whose existence there is on record a perfectly enormous body of evidence which is unshaken by the most searching investigation. And, as I say, a mystery which won't stand such investigations doesn't deserve it.

## FROM ISSY BONN'S COLLECTION OF YARNS

Of course you remember my friend Jaky Finklefeffer? Well, Jaky's now in Ack-Ack—he's in a searchlight unit. Well, one day when Jaky was training, one of the sergeants said to him, "If you were in action and got one ear shot off, what would you do?" Jaky said, "I'd keep on firing." The sergeant said, "That's good, that's very good. But suppose you get the other ear shot off?" "Well, then," said Jaky, "I'd stop firing." "Why?" asked the sergeant; and Jaky said, "Because my tin hat would be over my eyes."

Another day during his training they asked him general knowledge questions. The sergeant said, "What's the shape of the world?" "Round," said Jaky. "How do you know it's round?" said the sergeant. "Well," said Jaky, "so all right, then, it's square—who wants an argument!"

Shortly after he got posted to his unit one of the boys went into a dentist's and said, "Do you take teeth out without trouble?" The dentist said, "Yes." "Oh," said the fellow "that's good, but I don't believe in gas or injections for painless extractions. If a tooth's got to come out, out with it, no matter how much the pain." "Oh," said the dentist, "you're a brave lad. Sit down in the chair." "Oh no," said the fellow, "it's not my tooth, it's my mother-in-law's. She's downstairs."

Now I want to tell you about some of those crazy inventions of Jaky's father, Old Man Finklefeffer. Here's one or two he invented specially for the Ack-Ack. The first, a cellophane newspaper. You can read and watch your kit through it at the same time! One for the ladies: Red, green, blue, and yellow sleeping-tablets so you can dream in technicolor. And finally, for all the Forces, a special invention: gloves with luminous thumbs for hitch-hiking at night!

## GAMES AND PASTIMES

*by Hubert Phillips*

### ("Dogberry" of the *News Chronicle*)

I WANT to suggest a few pastimes which may help to amuse you, especially those of you who are in the Forces and for whom organized games are not accessible. Pastimes which you can play at any time, without previous preparation, and without any apparatus or equipment. There are plenty of games of this kind; I have invented dozens myself—and perhaps my best plan is to describe a few typical ones. Each of these will most probably suggest others.

First there are a number of word games. Most people are interested in words (as witness how popular cross-word puzzles are). "Ghosts" is my favourite word game. The first player names a letter which is to be the first letter of a word; each layer adds a letter in turn, each having some particular word

in view; but whoever completes a word, if it has more than three letters, must lose a life. Three-letter words don't count. For example: first player: C. Second player: A. Third player: R. So far we have CAR. Now if the fourth player adds D, E, P, or T, making CARD, CARE, CARP, or CART, he loses a life, since each of these is a word. So he continues with B (carbon) or C (carcase), and so on. A player who is stumped may try to bluff. It is important to have a word in mind when you add a letter, because the next player may challenge you, and if you have no word you lose a life. There is scope in this game for much ingenuity.

Another word game is the common or garden spelling bee—everyone knows that. But the spelling bee has all sorts of variants and need not be confined to spelling. The B.B.C. Brains Trust is a sort of glorified spelling bee. Why don't you try to organize a modest little brains trust of your own?

In one game which I have always found very popular, there are two teams and a compère. The compère first names a category or kind of people, places or things, and then an initial letter. For example, an author: "T". Whoever says "Tennyson" or "Trollope" or "Thackeray" or "Tolstoy" or any other author beginning with "T" scores one point for his team. A good point about this game is that you can make it as easy or as difficult as you like.

Yet another word game: words spelled backwards. Here again you have a compère and, if you like, two or more teams. The compère spells out the words, beginning with the last letter. Try two or three:

- 1 AISHCUF
- 2 EREHWEMOS
- 3 ELBISAEF

Did you get them? The first was Fuchsia, the second Somewhere and the third Feasible.

Jumbled words, commonly called Anagrams, can be dealt with in the same way.

Then there is the ordeal by stop-watch: how many so-and-sos can you think of in one minute. For example: English counties, characters in Dickens, or winners of the Derby, or glamorous blondes. I have often heard this game played on the wireless. Most beginners think this game harder than it is because they do not realize what a long time a minute is. The great thing is not to get flustered.

"Telegrams", too, can be great fun. One player chooses a



word and the others have to think up amusing telegrams, the successive words of which have as their initial letters the letters of the word chosen. For example, last time I played, one of the words chosen was WEDNESDAY. The winning telegram was *War-office experts dumbfounded; Norwegian eggs, shellproof, defying alien yoke.* That was produced within the time limit of five minutes.

## HOW TO BE PHOTOGRAPHED IN UNIFORM

*by Madame Yevonde*

### The well-known West End Photographer

Lots of girls, and men too, are getting their photographs taken these days. Maybe it is to send to your boy-friend, or your wife, or your parents, but whatever it is for, it is worth taking a little trouble in order that the photograph shall be as good as possible. Now what I am going to say applies chiefly to girls, especially girls in uniform; but men will find some of the tips useful too!

There are two things which go to make a good photograph: a good photographer and a good subject. The first is a matter of care in the selection of the photographer, the second is something in which every person who goes to have their photo taken can help. I have a large connection as a photographer—I suppose I'm what would be described as a society photographer—but I've taken scores of pictures of girls in uniform and I'm often astonished at the little trouble girls take to be a good subject.

First of all, let's deal with the uniform. Empty everything out of your pockets—it makes the uniform sit better. One girl who came in the other day seemed to be carrying everything but the kitchen stove. There were stacks of letters from boy-friends, a torch battery, a tallow candle, and a half-darned stocking screwed up in a housewife. That's not giving the uniform a chance.

Next, pull your jacket down, see that the skirt is hanging properly, and straighten your tie. That's better.

The next thing to do is to sit down and relax. People often

ys seem so much better in snaps." This usually photographer's they hold themselves rigidly, harden up and their expression gets set. The lax. Try shaking your hands loosely from the help you to relax.

ill. This isn't as easy as it sounds, although often seem to be quite good at it. The easiest photographed was Bernard Shaw; he seemed to be less indefinitely.

oulders well back, and don't poke out your chin. this because they are afraid of looking as if they in. So they stick out their chins aggressively at ruin the picture. At the same time, don't tuck your collar—just hold your head naturally. and very slightly from the waist;—that will bring the picture.

most people's faces is better than the other, and ve a definite liking for one side rather than the usually the left side. Some say this is because we ight sides as babies and that the fragile bones are place. The photographer will tell you which is the otograph.

he important question of make-up. First of all, on lipstick when you're being photographed; put d evenly with great care, or your mouth will come patchy. And always use a light-coloured lipstick hotographer is using panchromatic plates, which ly these days. Never use orange lipstick or any-on it.

a brunette, choose a powder to match the colour graphed. You see, white complexions and light-der are difficult to take against a dark uniform. way, if you turn your head slightly it will show the your cheek, which is very important.

ld cream or vaseline on your eyelids will make your more brilliant. Brush your eyelashes with your f your eyebrows aren't already nice and glossy, a time will probably be a help.

l, your hair. This is most important, and if you're om it is much better short. The high collars and oulders of the jackets are inclined to make most women cked. And short hair will help this. And it shows

off a girl's ears too—those things which poets are always raving about.

Yes, it's worth taking a little trouble to be a good subject. You'll agree with me when you see how good your photograph really can be.

## LAUGHS WITH THE FORCES [II]

In these days of hitch-hiking round the country it's quite easy to get lost, and that's how I found myself one day—lost. So I went up to an old boy who was sweeping the road, and said to him "What place is this?" "So-and-so," he replied. "Bit of a one horse place, isn't it?" I said. He replied, "You wouldn't think so if you had my job!"

LANCE-CORPORAL DICK CALKIN

## EVERYBODY'S WAR

Miss Diana Fosdyke Young  
Drove Captain Herbert Shaw.  
Now Diana's off the very top rung  
While Captain Shaw is—well, I mean,  
It's everybody's war, you know,  
It's everybody's war.

Herbert loved the tops of her ears,  
The upper-class way she clanked her gears;  
He loved her curls and her ankle boots,  
And her highly original salutes.  
And wished she wouldn't always wear,  
That highly respectful, curious stare.

He discussed the route, the state of the road,  
The life of a tyre and the Highway Code;  
He was so amusing about the weather,  
But somehow it never brought them together,  
Till day by day it grew harder to bear  
That faintly disdainful lovely stare.

Friends in Balham and some in Mess  
 Grew quite concerned about Herbert's distress,  
 For it stood in a sense for what is meant  
 By an officer being an off *and* a gent—  
 Although as I think we've said before,  
 It's everybody's war, you chaps,  
 It's everybody's war.

Herbert buckled under the strain,  
 Lost his poise, some plans and a train,  
 An excellent post at Brigade H.Q.,  
 And since departing from Waterloo  
 Has disappeared in a curious way  
 In that strange affair in Platibus Bay.

But before departing he left a note on  
 The length and breadth of his devotion,  
 And Diana said, "Well, would you believe  
 The darling kept all *that* up his sleeve.  
 Why ever didn't he say so before?  
 My dears, it's everybody's war,  
 It's everybody's war."

(Moral: Always make yourself clear  
 Like Diana's present Brigadier.)

LANCE-SERGEANT JOHN BISHOP.

## THE WRESTLER

by *Sandy Powell*

I've had some funny experiences in my life, but nothing like the one I had the other week. I tried all-in wrestling. That's the right name for it—"all in". I was all in two seconds after we started. Of course, I knew it was a bit rough, like the big apple; but you do stand a chance in the big apple—and I'll admit I didn't know much about it, and I made one or two mistakes. The first one was when I went into the ring, and the second was when I went out—on my head instead of my feet. However, to begin at the commencement. When I got into

the ring, opposite to me was a gentleman who looked like my cross between Boris Karloff and a hippopotamus. The I've announced him as Killoffski, the human anæsthetic. "Well," me thought, "this must be the gentleman who is going to wrestle with me." So I went over to him, put my hand out, and spoke to him.

Now whether he misunderstood me or not I don't know—but wouldn't like to say. But I only said, "Turned out nice again," and before I knew where I was, I was on my back.

Somebody picked me up, and then I heard a gong strike and to I was on my back again. Now in the next few seconds I did all things I never thought was possible. I did the splits—stood on my head—put my legs round my neck, and finished up like a sailor's knot.

Mind you, I do think he went too far, because when all said and done, I wasn't built for a contortionist. And I wouldn't have cared if he'd left it at that, but when he jumped on me as well, I thought it was time I made a move; but the only thing I could move was my eyelids. He just put his legs round my neck and nearly choked me. At the back of my mind I thought "This man doesn't want me to get up," and I thought, "When I do get up, I'll give him a piece of my tongue." But I was too late—he'd already taken a piece.

That was the last straw. I said: "Right, you've asked for it, now you're going to get it." Now I didn't know whether to tell him off or take stronger measures. You see, I was rather awkwardly placed. I'd no idea where my arms were, or where they had happened to my legs. Then suddenly, just like a bolt from the blue, I saw a leg—right across my face. I thought, "This is my chance, I'll be up in no time now," so I put my teeth right in the calf of the leg and bit as hard as I could. But what a mistake I made—it was my leg!

Well, of course, that disheartened me altogether. I thought "If I'm going to be on his side as well, it's impossible for me to fight both of us." In any case, I was frightened to do anything else because I couldn't tell which was him and which was me. I thought, "If I poke his eyes out they'll probably be mine." I thought if only something would happen so that I could get up. And something did happen. I got up all right—but he picked me up. He put me on top of his head—spun round like a top, and then threw me on the floor as hard as he could.

Well, now, there was no reason for that! I wasn't doing any harm—and it was my own leg that I bit and not his. I couldn't understand it. I'd never said a wrong word to that

man in my life—I'd never even seen him before. So I thought, "Well, I've got to get out of this ring by hook or by crook," and, believe me or not, that man seemed to read my thoughts. He just picked me up like a baby and threw me right over the ropes, out of the ring. That was the only sensible thing he'd done all night, but unfortunately he threw me on some people who were watching us wrestle, and they must have been annoyed, because they threw me back again. But I don't think Mr. Killofski wanted to wrestle any more because he threw me out again!

Well, when he got tired of playing shuttlecock with me, he had a go at the referee, and threw him out of the ring. This caused a great commotion, and then somebody announced that Mr. Killofski had been disqualified and that I was the winner, so there and then I decided I would retire from wrestling with an unbeaten record.

## QUIZ-TIME

*by Alfred Dunning*

SOMEONE has said that there are only seven original jokes in the whole wide world, and that all others, from the conundrums of the first King's Jester to the patter of Flanagan and Allen, are simply variations on the original seven.

Producers of radio variety shows, however, are born optimists, and in spite of everything they spend a great deal of their time and more of their energy in a frantic search for the mythical Eighth Original Joke. They've about as much chance of finding it as of coming across a unicorn playing Bach on a tin whistle in Charing Cross Road—but they go on looking, just the same, until at last they go grey and die and are buried between a matinée and the six-o'clock news.

The best that can be done—that it has ever been possible to do since the Seventh Original Joke was cracked before an audience of cave-men sucking mammoth bones in 10,000 B.C.—is to find a reasonable original variation of one or other of the jokes. That is where the Quiz comes in.

The Comedy Quiz is not peculiar to Ack-Ack, Beer-Beer. It was run quite a time ago in the form of such questions as, "Why did the chicken cross the road?" and that other breath-taking, side-splitting inquest on when a door is not a door. Bu

it was not until it was introduced into Ack-Ack, Beer-Beer that it found, as it were, the right soil and conditions in which to grow to the glory it has undoubtedly reached.

Why is the Comedy Quiz of Ack-Ack, Beer-Beer so popular?

To answer that, you have to remember that it is really the first cousin to the Booby Trap and the Apple Pie Bed. Those two institutions are pretty aged fun-makers, and yet, in some form or other, they're as popular today as ever they were. In fact, if the booby-trap were to be abolished from the world's screens, Hollywood might as well close down.

People laugh at the victim of a well-arranged booby-trap—at the unlucky fellow who opens a door and brings down on himself a mass of debris, wet or dry—for the very same reason that they laugh at the efforts of the men and women who find themselves roped into an Ack-Ack, Beer-Beer Comedy Quiz. It has been put very compactly in one sentence: "There, but for the grace of God, go I."

If Quiz teams were to be drawn exclusively from experts—from the Joads, Campbells and Huxleys—there would undoubtedly be amusement once or twice in seeing such giant brought low in attempts to sing soprano or imitate baths emptying. Everyone loves to see an expert being inexpert—to see dignity rendered undignified.

But this wouldn't be funny if it were done week after week. For a regular run of Quiz quarter-hours, we want to see—oh hear—how "our ain folk" are going to react. We want to enjoy, as I say, the feeling that it is quite possible *we* might be in the shoes of Gunner Smith or W.A.A.F. Brown; we want to be able to congratulate ourselves that we aren't—and we do it by applauding the ordinary mortals who are "going through it". What nice, kind-hearted folk we all are, aren't we? At all events, it goes to show that in satisfying our desire for *blood*, these boys and girls who, week after week, have come up to the microphone in an Ack-Ack, Beer-Beer Quiz, are deserving of all the applause they get, plus any extras there may be going. They offer themselves to be butchered to make an Ack-Ack holiday—they do it with both eyes wide open and grins which are cheerful in the face of coming adversity. They are, in short, heroes and heroines!

That is why it is worth while looking a little more closely at them and discovering, if possible, what those qualities are which make a good "quizee". Apart from being interesting to the student of human nature, it's useful for the promoter of

Quiz in canteen or Garrison Theatre to know which "victims" can be relied upon not to let him down when the time comes to the goat.

Needless to say, the first qualification of a Quiz team member is a sense of humour—avoid like the plague the fellow who takes himself seriously. He may be marvellous in a committee-room—especially if it's an unimportant committee—he certainly is marvellous in his own estimation, but he is quite unable to see the funny side of his own nature even with the help of a mirror. Leave Dignity alone.

On the other hand, don't expect to find winners for a Quiz team among "professional" comedians. Those boys—and girls—who are the life and soul of every party invariably try to live up to what is expected of them. In answering Quiz tests you can guarantee that first of all they'll try to make wisecracks at the Question Master. Later, when they're actually on the job of reciting and eating buns at the same time or touching their noses and singing soprano, they are certain to overdo the thing—exaggerate the humour, gild the lily, and put on that "professional" touch which is the very thing no Quiz needs. So by-pass *whomie* in your selection.

After the "don'ts" the "dos". Do get men and women who are game to have a shot at anything—who don't guarantee success—who have practically no self-confidence but really nice—and genuine—sickly smiles when you tell them what it's all about. Get people who won't want to talk back at you—who appreciate, for Quiz purposes, how dead right the poet was when he said, "Theirs not to reason why, theirs but to do and die!" Get people who vary a little in their general make-up—who've one rather amusing characteristic—the very tall, small, fat, thin, husky or broad, either in beam or dialect—or grin.

In short, select two teams of genuinely "average men" or girls, and you can be sure you've got the real heroes and heroines who are going to make your Quiz a success.

Right. Now assuming, as we are—and this is the real purpose of this chapter—assuming you are running a Quiz and have got your teams together, what about *your* job as Question Master?

You can take it as certain that at least 50 per cent of any success, even with perfect teams, will come through your efforts. Your skill and tact, and your *showmanship*.

Your first and most important job is to get on friendly terms with your teams *before* you go into action. If you can, have .



cup of tea with them—or words to that effect. Pull their legs a little by painting an over-sombre picture of the terrible ordeal they're going to face—tell them that the suicide rate of Quizzees is higher than that of any other trade—except comedians' gag-writers. And keep on grinning.

But all the time take careful stock of your people. Discover whether by any chance that "life-and-soul-of-the-party" fellow has crept into the team after all.

If so, make a mental note that he requires watching and should not be given any latitude. Look out, too, for gigglers among the girls. This is just a form of nervousness and quite often disappears after the first round, just as knee-knocking usually stops after a youngster's first dive into the swimming-bath. But while it lasts it can hold up the smooth running of a Quiz, and whenever you find an obvious giggler, arrange to give her an easy and not-too-self-sacrificial question to start with.

Most of these discoveries and adjustments will come during and after the rehearsal. Yes, a Quiz must be rehearsed and every one of those you hear on the air is treated thus. *Only*—in case you are getting ready to heave a brick and cry, "I told you so"—let me hurriedly add that the questions given to the teams at rehearsal are never those put to them in the actual broadcast.

So you must rehearse—and keep an eye open and an ear cocked for the snags I've mentioned. In addition, you've got to rehearse yourself in showmanship. Learn to make appropriate remarks before and after each answer. Merely to chorus "Very good—that deserves a point," or, "That's not quite right is to head straight for mediocrity. As Question Master, yours is the difficult job of pulling the legs of your teams in public, without annoying them or worrying them, and yet, at the same time getting a laugh from the audience. There's no recipe for doing that well. You need self-confidence, which you can acquire and quick-wittedness, which you might cultivate if you don't possess it—though expect a few failures in the process—and thank which is sent from heaven.

Let's imagine then that you've got your teams together, that you've been through a rehearsal script with them and that the teams have proved somewhat scared and slow-moving. You can now congratulate yourself that so far all is well—for it is usually the somewhat "sluggish" teams which key-up for the actual performance and put up a really rapid-fire show.

But you've still a deal to do before you can go in front

the audience. Let's make a list of these things to be done and you'll see. (Some of them, no doubt, will have been settled at rehearsal.)

1. Check the names of the teams.
2. Toss for "batting order" of teams—and arrange, by means of a little judicious cheating that they appear in the order *you* want—usually "girl—man—girl—man" in the case of mixed teams.
3. Make sure that individuals know the tunes of the songs they have to sing—without, of course, knowing *how* they have to sing them.
4. Make sure you have all the properties you require.
5. See that the various slips of paper bearing the words of songs, verses of nursery rhymes and so on, are in their proper order.
6. Nominate a "gongster" (with gong) and a scorer (with pencil and paper).
7. Possess yourself of a stop-watch which only stops when *you* decide—or, alternatively, a watch with a second hand. For time-keeping is essential if you are running your Quiz on a truly competitive basis, as you should.
8. Arrange with the compère of the show that he should introduce the teams and arrange them on either side of the microphone (incidentally, see that you *have* a mike); and that he should bring in the gongster, and bring in the scorer. Have someone make a ceremonial entry with any properties you need and finally—to a fanfare of trumpets, if possible—have yourself introduced.

That is Showmanship—and it pays!

From the moment this list is made, checked, and put into operation; from the moment, that is, you make your entry as Quiz King or Question Master—the rest is up to you. Begin your act with a funny story connected with your audience or your "victims". That puts everyone in a good humour. Next expound the rules—very brief ones. Tell everyone they *are* brief so that no one will reach for his cap. "Thirty seconds for an answer or—the gong. That's all." And then—and if you say "without more ado", which you shouldn't, see to it that you act that way, which you should—sail right in and fire your first question. Don't, unless you are broadcasting, read it from a script. Don't hesitate to repeat it—in some other word, if necessary—so that your "victim" can get the real hang of it.

But this done, *don't* drool on with further unnecessary remarks while the audience wait eagerly to see the slaughter begin.

And so, to the meat in the sandwich, the pill in the jam, the slug under the lettuce—the questions at the back of the answers—yea—the questions.

There's a selection of these just ahead, but they are offered as suggestions rather than questions to be blindly copied, and there's a good reason for saying so. They have all been written in the first place and with the expenditure of some midnight oil for the purpose of broadcasting.

As a result, they are chiefly shaped to produce answers which depend on being *heard*—on sounds, that is, rather than on sight.

But if you are working before an audience in canteen or theatre, you *must* pose questions which call for actions as well as sounds. Frame them in such a way that they call for winking or bun eating, or toe touching, or arm raising, or the use of visit properties—hats, caps, clothing, bottles, and so on. And incidentally, as you will be—or should be—working with microphone, bear in mind that actions such as walking or tripping about the stage will take your victims out of microphone range and are therefore to be avoided.

Well, that has spilled practically all the beans. I might add a sub-section on how to read your press notices on the morning after the nightmare before, and another on how to look up concernedly at the victims when on that same morning they approach you with a sort of unhealthy gleam in their eyes. But as this branch of Quiz Craft belongs more properly to a chapter on unarmed combat, I desist.

Here, then, is your ammunition. Take a load of it, blast away, and add a little more to the grim gaiety of life today.

## QUIZ-TIME QUESTIONS

[NOTE: In the questions which call for songs or verses, you should make your own choice of them, only bear in mind that there is such a thing as the Law of Copyright. Keep, therefore, to nursery rhymes and old "standard songs", unless you make your own arrangements in regard to permission.]

1. I want you to give us specimens of the kiss without a partner. I want two specimens, please. First the peck, then the kiss—lingering. And just add a few appropriate words before each.

2. I want you to imagine you're singing, say, for a film

and you are required not to show your teeth. What you must do then is to cover them up with your lips and then sing this song—(naming a song, the tune of which is known to the victim, and at the same time handing him or her the words on a slip of paper.)

3. A little two-voiced conversation from you, please—a quarrel between a man and his wife, with the wife getting all the best of it, but instead of using words use letters of the alphabet. For example—A—BCD—EFG—HI—JKL: Express all the emotions of the two quarrelling people using these letters only.

4. Now for some real he-man stuff. You know how opera singers sing ordinary lines of conversation, don't you? Well, I want you to imagine that you're taking part in an Ack-Ack opera. Sing a few lines in which you explain to the sergeant why you're late on parade—tell him it was because you went to a dance the night before with a rather sweet young thing. Only remember—sing it—and end on a high note.

5. Next, lend an ear—in fact a couple of ears. Got 'em on target? Good—now listen.

"All four shouted 'Fore' at the man on all fours, and four hands mopped four foreheads in the forenoon heat".

How many men have I referred to? (*Five—four mopping and one more, because a man was on all fours.*)

6. How many stripes would two A.T.S. sergeants and a Corporal have? (*Sixteen—Eight on each side.*)

7. I see you've got your tongue in your cheek. All right, just say this ten times in fifteen seconds,

"Miss Smith's a complete myth, miss".

Ten times in fifteen seconds, starting—now!

8. You know the phrase "Wet your whistle", well, I want you to do it quite literally. Whistle up the scale, doh, ray, me, etc., and between each note take a little sip of this. It's austerity wine—100 per cent pure water. Full marks if you sing right up the scale in fifteen seconds. Ready? Go!

9. Interested in sport? Right. Well, what we want from you is a real cracker-jack snappy spot of running commentary—on a tortoise race.

10. I'd like you to turn yourself into two people—a nurse and a small boy who has just eaten too many green apples. Let's hear the conversation!

11. I want you to imagine you're a gramophone whose controlling mechanism is rather erratic. So when you recite this

nursery rhyme you'll watch my hand, and when I raise it you'll speed up your record and your rhyme and of course the pitch of your voice, and when I lower it you'll slow down and recite very low and slow. See? And if you keep strictly with me the whole way, you get a point. The needle's on—listen to the record. (Hand the questionee the words of the nursery rhyme on a piece of paper.)

12. I want you to imagine two things. First that you've just become engaged and secondly that you are clean broke. Now dictate a telegram of not more than eighteen words to your home, telling them these facts and making it quite clear that you're not broke because you're engaged, or vice versa. And do it in fifteen seconds.

13. I want a sort of conversation from you—a three-cornered argument—and the three voices have to rise at times to a high pitch of intensity—jump, as it were, from soothing gentleness to real downright anger. Oh, and one thing more. There aren't to be any words in this argument because the three voices you'll use are those of a sheep, a duck and a cow. And you must keep it up for at least thirty seconds.

A sheep, a duck and a cow arguing. Fire away!

14. Next, if you please, a little boy getting well and truly spanked—and the sound of the spanking included. You can use your hands for that.

15. You remember Humpty Dumpty, I suppose? The words are:

Humpty Dumpty sat on a wall,  
Humpty Dumpty had a great fall.  
All the King's horses and all the King's men  
Couldn't put Humpty together again.

Well, I want you to turn yourself into a very learned professor and give us the story of Mr. Humpty as you might give it at a lecture to some *very* learned society. You can use words a mile long if you like, and of course all the hesitancies and so on that you may have in stock. The time you get for this is 45 seconds.

16. Here's a tongue-twister for you—guaranteed to turn your tongue into a corkscrew—while you're trying to say it ten times in fifteen seconds. The words are: "Six swimming women singing".

17. For you two we've written a little melodrama in which *you* are the heroine and *you* are the wicked squire (indicating which is which). Now go ahead. Read everything in your

script except the names. (Make the girl play the "Wicked Villain" and the man the "shrinking heroine".)

*Girl*: "Ah ha! At last, my proud beauty, I am alone with—you."

*Man*: "Oh, Archibald, I am but a weak maiden and you are so strong and cave-like."

*Girl*: "Marigold—may I call you Marigold?—I cannot live without you. I see your face in my shaving-mirror every morning. Marigold, will you be mine—to take care of for ever?"

*Man*: "Oh, Archibald—yes, you may call me Marigold—this is too sudden—for I am but a helpless child of nature. But perhaps—yes—perhaps."

*Girl*: "Ah ha! Come to my arms!"

*Man*: "Oh, Archibald! No! No, Archibald. No! No. No. Archibald, NO! Well, maybe!"

18. I want you to sing this nursey rhyme in the sort of voice you would imagine a baby would like to hear, but remember that every other line is drowned by baby's crying. I want you to supply the crying too, and end with a really good baby's yell. (Hand the team member the words of a suitable nursery rhyme.)

19. Here's another nursery rhyme for you. It's the well-known "Little Bo-Peep", but I don't want you to recite it. I want you to give us the story of Little Bo-Peep as though you were the farmer who employed her, perhaps as a Land Girl. You've just heard what's happened to her sheep, and I want you to report the whole business to your wife.

20. As you probably know, to your sorrow, I suppose, there are no Spring Sales this year. Well, let's go back to the old day when sales were sales and here's an announcement of one of them. I want you to read it appropriately enough, as if you were a tragedienne appearing in, again quite appropriately, some soul-stirring tragedy. (For this you need the words of a suitable announcement, which you can, of course, compose yourself.)

21. From you, I'd like an imitation of two railway engines having an argument. You can use "Shushes" and whistles, and of course vary the speed to suit their tempers. But no actual words, remember. Right away, then.

22. Will you whistle for me? Whistle this song so that from start to finish there's never a moment when you aren't whistling. In fact, whistle both while breathing out and breathing in. And just to help you not to laugh as you're doing it, win!

40. I want you to sing us a song in which each line is sung by a different nationality and occupation. Say, first line by a mythical announcer, second by a Scotsman, third by a very hoarse-voiced individual, and fourth by—say—someone who speaks only broken English. Clear? Right away! (Choose a suitable four-line chorus.)

41. Your little piece is a simple common or garden multiplication table. Twice one are two; twice two are practically four, and so on. Well, sing it, make your own tune up, put all the fire and vigour into it as an operatic tenor should—let's have quick runs and long, lingering lines—and end up (as, of course, is right and proper) right away on the top floor with twice twelve.

42. You know telephone trunk calls are now restricted to, I think, six minutes? Well, let's imagine they are being restricted to 30 seconds. I want you to make such a call and announce your identity—you're speaking to home. Then in 30 seconds I want you to do three things:

1. Ask them to send you a pair of silk stockings you left when on leave—tell them just where they'll find them.
2. Tell them that you've met your cousin Millicent and that she's engaged to someone whom you briefly described and
3. Discover that you've got the wrong number.

43. I want you to give us a little impersonation. Imagine a mass meeting of the Amalgamated Union of Ducks and Hens. Everyone wants to speak at once—quacking and cackling until a rooster finally drowns the whole meeting. Now give us a brief impression of the proceedings—quacking, cackling and, finally, His Lordship the Rooster! And keep it up for at least 30 seconds, starting—now!

44. Imagine you are at a Trade Union meeting. It's the Consolidated Association of Babies in Arms. You are the chairman. You are making an impassioned speech in favour of the complete abolition of Rice Pudding. Remember, I want sound effects, not words. At your age you're not old enough to know how to speak with the exception of the one word "Rice." Got the idea? Right—hold forth!

45. Cue for song! Take this song, please, and sing the first line quite straight. Sing the second line as if you were chewing gum, the next line straight, the next chewing—and so on to the end.

46. And now here is that famous basso soprano one-man duet.

Here is your chorus (handing over the words). Watch me for hand signals, and when I put my hand up sing bass—when I make signs downwards sing soprano. You must keep with me all the way to win a point. It's quite simple. Off you go!

47. A little dialogue for you two. It's a proposal. You (the lady) are doing the proposing and you (the man) are doing the turning down. Only, all the proposing has to be done not in words but in letters of the alphabet. And all the answers are to be in numbers. That clear? Oh, and remember, when the lady refuses to take "No" for an answer, get really angry and have the last word—or rather the last number. Right!

48. I want you to turn yourself into a little boy who's got his hair tousled in a fight with the kid next door. Mummy is combing it for you—rather roughly, I'm afraid. Well, as she does so I want you to tell her, very tearfully, just how the other kid gave you a licking, and every now and then—when the comb stings, you know—give us the appropriate squeal.

49. You are a very refeened girl. Far too refeened to accept poor old "—" (naming some well-known local character if possible) when he proposes. So I want you to turn him down, but I want you to sound so refeened when you do it that we can't make out a word you say.

50. Give me a little imitation, please. Use no words in this—only appropriate sounds. The old boy goes downstairs for a drink. Now:

1. He pours it out.
2. He adds a dash from the syphon, and
3. (No words, remember—only sounds) he discovers he's got the wrong bottle and he's drinking vinegar.

Well; there you are; there's a selection of Quiz-time questions for you. Having read them, you will probably be able to think of many more. But don't blame us if some of your victims waylay you one dark night. That is one of the possible penalties of being a successful Question Master.

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## LAUGHS WITH THE FORCES [12]

WE'VE just been having some lovely fun on manœuvres—the it was grand. By the way, we don't use blank cartridges or throw flour at one another any more. No, we just run behind





THE EDITOR IN "QUIZ TIME"

fellows and say, "Bang, bang, you're dead," and that man's dead he drops out. I saw a young officer jump out from behind a hedge, run up behind one fellow, say, "Bang, bang, you're dead," and the fellow didn't take a bit of notice of him. So he did it again, "Bang, bang, you're dead." Still no notice taken. So he got hold of him by the shoulder and said, "Look here, I said 'Bang, bang, you're dead' twice—you should be dead by now." The fellow said, "Oh no, I shouldn't. Can't you hear me going 'tick-tick'? I'm a tank!"

CORPORAL BILL WADDINGTON.

## TWO SHORT STORIES

*by Ursula Bloom*

### "MIDSUMMER NIGHT"

PEOPLE had always said that the gun-site was eerie, stuck as it was in a ghostly valley, but nobody ever gave the legend a second thought. In war there are other more important matters than legends. Midsummer night Edna was alone at her post, and it had been raining hard, so that the grass was heavy with water. Last thing, Nesta had come to see her; Nesta was Edna's roommate, and she knew all about the row with Jack. Jack was due for foreign service just when the quarrel had cropped up; they'd split because neither would say they were sorry. Next week it would be too late to say anything.

"Well," said Nesta, "it's a bit chilly; I'll get one of the canteen girls to bring you out a cup of coffee," and she squelched across the field, her footprints marked darkly on grass that was silver with rain.

Edna had another couple of hours, and she was grateful when she saw the canteen girl coming with the coffee. The quarrel with Jack was breaking her heart, yet pride held her back and she would not let herself swallow that pride. The canteen girl drew level with her tray.

"I'll stay whilst you drink it," she said. "I know how you feel."

Edna realized that Nesta must have been talking. "I'm one of those idiots who can't say I'm sorry, even though I want to," she said.

"I'd telegraph it," said the canteen girl. "Once I couldn't say that I was sorry; he went away and he never came back. That's why I'm here. I'm looking for him and I expect I'll go on looking for him always."

"You joined up?" asked Edna.

"Yes," said the canteen girl. Then, slowly: "Yes, I suppose I joined up, but not like you did. I joined up differently."

"Tell me," said Edna. But the girl wouldn't; she said no, it was nothing, only it had taught her that life was too precious to be squandered in silly quarrels.

"Yes, I'll wire in the morning," said Edna, because suddenly everything seemed to be easier and suddenly that pride had vanished.

"Thank you so much," she called after her.

She watched the canteen girl going across the field, and after a while she realized there was something queer about it; the canteen girl's feet did not squelch; she left no footprints behind her on the grass. She wasn't real. Only her message had been real. In this world there are so many things that we do not understand. I can't pretend to explain.

### "TOLD IN A TEA-CUP"

PATSY was a predictor girl, who dabbled in other sources of prediction too, for her hobby was reading fortunes in tea-cups. Lofty was a gunner, nicknamed Lofty because he could top six foot with three more inches; he had fallen for Patsy. Before she went on that February leave she read her own tea-cup. "Chance is coming to me in a big way. I see a medal. I see a spy. I see opportunity," she said; "for you, too, Lofty."

"Count me out of this," said Lofty, for the tea-cup business left him cold.

Patsy's leave expired the night that the raiders got the gun-site; she had to walk from the station, with tracer bullets cutting the sky and shells bursting overhead. It got so bad that she was grateful when she heard a man's voice above the noise. "Get down into the ditch, girl." She flopped just as a beauty came over. A man in uniform was taking cover too, and it was comforting to have company. In between the bombs they got talking, she nervously at first, he with a queer accent.

"You new here?" she asked.

"Maybe," said he, she thought evasively.

"Done this sort of job before?"

"Maybe."

"You'll find it very interesting," she told him.

She didn't know when she became suspicious, but she was quite sure when later he said: "It's easing off. Let's make a bolt for it. Is it far?"

He doesn't know the site, she thought. "I'll take you," she said, and she remembered the tea-cup with the medal, the spy, and chance coming in a big way. She'd got to do something about it. Ahead she saw a couple of soldiers and recognized Lofty by his height. "Lofty," she called, and stepped aside to speak to him. "He isn't one of us, Lofty, I'm sure of it; the tea-cup . . ." she said.

The stranger had been walking away when Lofty stopped him. "Now who are you?" said Lofty.

"I'm the new C.O.," said the stranger, but still with that queer accent.

"There's nothing wrong with the old C.O.," said Lofty grimly, and they took the man along to the guard-room. Patsy waited for them outside. A long time after Lofty came out. "Gawblimey," said he, "when you looked in your cup and saw chance in a big way, chance was just about the word for it. It was the new C.O. They'd kept it dark about the old one going. The medal you saw wasn't a medal at all. It was a mat, and we're on it in the morning."

She groped for his hand helplessly. "The tea-cup—" she began.

"Maybe you misread it," said Lofty. "Maybe we misused the chance, but when we're married, my girl, you and me are drinking coffee."

---

## ANIMAL COMMANDOS

by Frank Lane

IF you want to get a new angle on unarmed combat you can't do better than study the real experts—wild animals. Let's have a quick look round Nature's armoury.

Beasts of prey are masters of the silent approach. A hunter once watched a panther approaching stealthily across ground carpeted with dead leaves. At each step the panther brushed the leaves aside until he had cleared a space on which he could

place his foot. So silent was the beast's approach it was within four feet of its quarry before he knew it was there!

I suggest there might be a tip for our Commandos here—especially when negotiating ground covered with leaves and other noise-producing material.

A tiger, by the way, has been seen gently grinding dry leaves to powder before putting his weight on his paws. But then, of course, when a beast of prey is after his dinner he'll go to infinite pains to get within striking distance. A lion has been known to stalk an animal for two hours!

And when one of Nature's experts on the job comes in for the kill it is curtain for the quarry in a matter of seconds. In fact, Marcus Daly, a professional big-game hunter, says a lion will kill a zebra, eland or other game in less than half a second.

The neck is generally the point of attack. A slap by a mighty paw or one snap of those bone-smashing jaws and the beast's neck is broken or crushed.

But lions and tigers haven't a monopoly of fighting tricks. An alligator, for example, sometimes resorts to all-in wrestling to overcome its foe. It gets a firm grip on some part of its opponent's body and then starts turning over and over sideways as fast as it can. It's not many limbs that can stand that sort of punishment, and the fight is almost over when the alligator has succeeded, as it often does, in twisting a leg off.

Just in passing, in the happily unlikely event of your finding yourself in a hand-to-snout tangle with an alligator or crocodile—go for their eyes. It's about the only thing you can do to make them leave go. The same tactics, by the way, apply to scrapping with sharks. A boy once saved his companion from a shark's jaws by gouging at its eyes.

It's an interesting fact that there's hardly a weapon in use today that hasn't its counterpart in some form among wild animals. Yes, they've even got a Maginot line! I must tell you about that.

The American ground squirrels dig out earth to a depth of about a dozen feet. Then they tunnel horizontally. Branch tunnels are used for food storage. The excavated earth is pounded into pillboxes around the entrances. Look-outs are posted and they have underground listening-posts and alarm and all-clear signals.

The desert pack-rats of America use "barbed wire" to protect their homes. They pile prickly cactus about their nests and construct cactus runways to outlying posts. You see, the rats

are too light for the spines to hurt their feet, but should any large animal come snooping around seeking rats for lunch he will go away with sore feet for weeks.

And here, briefly, are a few more parallels to our modern weapons. The original tanks were the armadilloes. Their bodies were covered with bony plates and tough leather. One of the prehistoric armadilloes had a great ball of bone on the end of its tail. Presumably it used this fearsome war club to clout its enemies over the head!

Gas and liquid warfare is, of course, as old as the hills. Watch a squad of bombardier beetles going into action. Turning their backs to the foe, the bombardiers squirt from their hind end a reddish acid fluid which explodes with a pop. As the liquid comes into contact with the air it dissolves into a cloud of bluish smoke which hovers like a gas barrage and covers the beetles' retreat. The gas has irritant properties and generally succeeds in putting the enemy to flight.

And then there is a certain locust which uses its own blood as a side-arm. It shoots, like a practised Texas cowboy, from the hip. A special muscle opens a pore in the leg and shoots a blistering stream of locust blood to a distance of a couple of feet.

So, you see, there's not much we humans can teach the animals about the art of war, but maybe there's still a tip or two we can learn from them.

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## THOUGHTS ON SENTRY DUTY

WELL, here we go, another two hours of nothing. If I'm not sick of these sentry goes! Two hours. Holy Smoke! It wouldn't seem long enough, though, if I was in that hut curled up in my blankets. Hey! My blankets! They're still hanging on that barbed wire. I knew there was something I should have done this afternoon. Looks as if it might rain, too! Boy! That'll be nice! Wet blankets! That's all I need. Wonder if it will rain. Looks pretty black up there. No stars at all. Oh yeah, there's one. "Starlight, starbright, first star I've seen tonight."

I wonder if Ann still watches for the first star at night and makes a wish. Mostly it used to be that bright one that popped out over the trees in Stanley Park. What was its name? Never

did know much about stars. Wonder if your whole life really is written in the stars, like the Mohammedans say. Or is it the Buddhists? Wonder what I'd do if I could look up at the sky and see my future. Probably shoot myself. Be fun, though, to know. Maybe up there some future day I'm a hero. Maybe I've done something really terrific. Saved hundreds of lives, or defended the gun position singlehanded against a flock of Stukkas or Me. 110s and I've got a commission and been decorated. Boy, oh, boy! Imagine how proud Ann and Mother would be. What if I stepped off the train at home, a captain or even a colonel, and the winner of the Victoria Cross. The first V.C. in our part of the country. Everybody'd be there. And I'd have to make a speech. Bet I could, too. "Ladies and Gentlemen. Thank you very much for this wonderful reception. I can't tell you how happy I am to be home again with all of you, and if I've done anything, however small, to bring honour to my town, I'm very proud." Yeah, I could do it if I had to. . . .

Brrrrrr. . . . That wind's getting cold. Don't think it's going to rain though. The clouds are rolling away. Look at the stars. Wonder how many millions there really are. Wonder if that bright one will shine over Stanley Park tonight. Gosh! I wish I was with Ann, watching it right now. With my arms around her and the smell of her hair. "Starlight, starbright, first star I've seen tonight. Wish I may . . . wish I might . . . have the wish I wish tonight."

GUNNER E. WARD MUSGROVE,  
Royal Canadian Artillery (Ack-Ack).

## POSTSCRIPT

THAT monologue, "Thoughts on Sentry Duty", was written and broadcast by a member of an Ack-Ack unit of the Royal Canadian Artillery stationed in this country. His home is in Vancouver, B.C.—and he is a long way from home.

But he is no farther from home than are many men in units of the British Army and Air Force now stationed overseas. . . . And to them, as to Canadian Gunner Ward Musgrove, must come, day and night, thoughts of their homes and of those they have left behind.

There is only one thing they wait for—one thing that seems

to bring them, if only for a moment, nearer home. It is Mail Day and the letters that Mail Day brings. Maybe it is difficult to realize how much these mean to them. But it can't take much imagination to realize what lack of news from home can mean, especially as the general news of blitzes and daylight raids and one thing or another gets through to the Forces overseas.

So there is at least one duty we can all of us remember who have friends or relatives overseas. It is a duty of which a lieutenant in a unit of one of the Royal Artillery Training Establishments told in this monologue which follows. It was broadcast in a special R.A.T.E. edition of Ack-Ack, Beer-Beer.

The scene is somewhere in West Africa on that greatest of all days, Mail Day. But it might just as easily be in the Faroe Islands or the Orkneys, in Gibraltar, Malta or Iraq, in East Africa, India, Burma or the Far East, or in any of the many places where our Forces are stationed. And the title which Lieutenant Leeman chose for his monologue was

### "A REMINDER TO THE FOLKS AT HOME"

BLIMEY, ain't it 'ot!

Fair wears you out, this sand, don't it?

When I get back to Civvy Street I'm going to stick to the streets and the grass. No more seaside 'olidays for me. Every time I see a bit of sand I'll think of this place. . . . Still, if we keep old Jerry on the run we'll soon be back 'ome. . . . 'Ome, gosh, I'd like to be there now. . . .

'Ere, move up, Shorty, let's sit down. Blimey, you don't want all the blinkin' desert, do yer? . . . What cher, Nobby, 'ow's it goin'? . . . Anybody got a fag? . . . Thanks, Charlie boy. Still got some left from yer last parcel, I see. . . . Funny I didn't get one last mail day. I expect it got left at the base or somewhere. . . . What! All the mail came up from the base? Oh well, I expect the missus missed the boat . . . or more likely she gave a letter to young Alfie to post and 'e stopped to 'ave a fight on the way. A real nib 'e is. Talk about fight—I wonder 'ow 'e's getting on. . . . Still, the mail comes today, don't it, mates? Queer sort of feeling you get on mail days, don't yer? Sort of expectant like. . . . You wonder 'ow they all are, what's been 'appening at 'ome . . . all the little things that didn't interest you at 'ome seem to be very important out 'ere. You get all impatient and the postman always seems to be lat



But 'e comes at last, and when 'e gives you your letters you feel that it's been worth waiting for.

You read 'em over and over, and then you feel sort of satisfied. Everything's O.K. at 'ome. . . . 'Ere, look, Shorty, ain't that the postman coming now? It is, ain't it . . . ? Yes, it is. . . . Come on, you blokes, line up. . . . Now don't shove, Smithy, we'll all get our letters. . . . Look, 'e's got a big batch of 'em this time. I think I can see my missus's letter. Look, that one. About 'alf-way down. The blue envelope. . . . She always sends 'em in blue envelopes. 'Ere, look. 'E's going to start now. Atkins, three of 'em. 'E always does well. Arliss, Brown, Benson, Broderick. . . . Nice parcel 'e's got there. Thought I might get a parcel this time. . . . Still, I know she's got enough to do with 'er money to keep the 'ome going and the kids up to scratch. As long as she drops me a line. That's all I worry about. . . . Harris, Harper. . . . I, J, K, L. It's getting near my turn now. Jenkins, Jones, King, Kotting, Kronin. . . . 'Ere it comes, Lacey, Lane, Lancing, Lawrence, Loughton. . . . Loughton! that's after me. 'Ere, what's this? Morris—blimey! . . . Norton. . . . Price. . . . Robinson. . . . Turner. . . . White. . . . No letter! 'Ere, post, is that all you've got? . . . Are you sure? You 'aven't left one in the bag, 'ave you? . . . No . . . no fooling, chum, 'ave a look—Lee's the name. I 'aven't 'ad a letter for six weeks. . . . Nothing? Quite sure? . . . O.K., pal . . . O.K. I wonder what's happening to 'er . . . I wonder if she's ill!—or the kids! Maybe they're ill and she's too busy to write. . . . I wonder if they've been bombed out! . . . I wish I knew. . . . I wish I knew something, whatever it is, good or bad. It's better than knowing nothing at all. 'Ow I 'ope they're all right. . . .

'Ello, Shorty, all O.K. at 'ome? That's good. . . . Wife O.K., Smith? . . . Good. . . . What's in the parcel, Brod? . . . What, more fags! Blimey! your sweetheart looks after you all right, don't she! Thanks—I don't mind if I do. Nothing like a smoke, is there? . . . No, I didn't get a letter this time. I don't know 'ow they are. . . . Blinking sun makes yer eyes water, don't it? . . . They say no news is good news. . . . But I wish—I wish I 'ad a letter all the same. . . . Solong, mates. . . .

—Just "*A Reminder to the Folks at Home*."

## CONCLUSION

come to the end of this medley from the Ack-Ack, Beer-programmes. The programmes still go on, just as Ack-Ack and Balloon Barrage still keep a Roof Over Britain. And the last balloon is bedded down and the last "Rest" is the best of luck to you wherever you are, and "Cheerio!"

## APPENDIX

Answers to Captain Cuttle's Sports Quiz.

- 1) No goal. The ball must be dropped by the referee at the place where the boy stopped it.
- 2) The golfer had not holed out. He must place the ball at the spot where the jackdaw picked it up, and play from there.
- 3) The umpire should give a decision. The bowler may appeal at any time before the next ball is bowled.
- 4) No goal. Free-kick to the defending side for ungentlemanly conduct.
- 5) It is a legitimate delivery. The bowler is perfectly entitled to kick his wicket over every time he bowls.
- 6) They do not halve. The first player forfeits the hole for giving his opponent incorrect information.
- 7) No one scored anything. The red must be replaced and the shot played again.
- 8) It is a foul, even though the marker should have spotted the blue; but only the previous stroke is a foul: that is, the seventh red. The striker therefore scores 48 and his opponent scores 4 for the foul.

The answer to the darts poser in Captain Cuttle's article is: First dart entered the single one; the second dart also entered single one but knocked out the first dart; and the third entered double one. Thus each of the three darts scored though the first dart's score was eliminated subsequently. (I know this is a money one.—Captain Cuttle.)

## ANSWERS TO JOE DAVIS' SNOOKER PROBLEMS

- (1) A billiard table, a full-sized billiard table, of course, has eight legs, although some have twelve.
- (2) How is the possible break of 155 made? The balls are all on the table. Your opponent makes a foul shot and leaves you a free ball. You take a colour as a red and then pot the black, scoring eight. The colour taken as a red is, of course, re-spotted, and you then proceed to take all the balls, 15 reds, 15 blacks, plus the colours, for 147. Total score, 147 plus 8 = 155.
- (3) It looks round! (Sorry!)

## RHYMING SLANG

It is really quite simple: "German stands for German band—hands. "Plates" is for plates of meat—feet. "Ave Maria" is simple—it stands for fire. So the sentence, translated, reads "I went up to the fire and warmed my hands, and toasted my feet."

## "THE RUMOUR" or "WHAT THE BOMBARDIER HEARD"

The Editor regrets that owing to the current paper shortage it has been found impossible to reprint the verses which told just what the bombardier *did* hear.

## ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

I WOULD like sincerely to thank all those who have taken part in past "Ack-ack, Beer-Beer" programmes and who have permitted the use in this book of the material which they broadcast. I would also like particularly to thank those broadcasters who have written special articles or stories for the book. The list of these names is too long to allow of individual thanks, but in the index of contributors which follows, all these names appear. These are the people who have made this book possible and who have contributed so largely to the success of the "Ack-Ack, Beer-Beer" programmes.

I would like also to thank the well-known caricaturist Sallon, who did the illustrations for this book. These illustrations are all new, having been specially drawn, and have never appeared before. Those who know Sallon's work will appreciate these additions to those drawings of his which they have already seen, and those others to whom the work may not be so well-known will doubtless look out for his name in future.

Much of the success of the "Ack-Ack, Beer-Beer" programmes, and consequently in the building of this book, has been due to the work of my former co-editor, Howard Thomas, and my present colleague, Alfred Dunning. For this I thank them, and would also like to thank the girls who have worked with me in the office so enthusiastically and often for such long hours: Anne Blair and my secretary Edna Deighton.

Sincere thanks are due also to those officers and men of Ack-Ack Command and Balloon Command and the many members of the A.T.S. and W.A.A.F., who have helped by their enthusiastic co-operation to make the programmes possible. In this I would like also to include the personnel of the Royal Artillery Training Establishments and of Coastal Artillery who have lately become participants in these broadcasts.

Finally, I should like to thank General Sir Frederick Pile and Air Marshal Sir Leslie Gossage for the trouble they have taken in writing forewords to this book; for their kind remarks about the success of the programmes; and for the never-failing support which they have given me in my work.

The day will soon be here when I shall no longer be editing these programmes, but I shall always look back upon "Ack-Ack, Beer-Beer" with pleasure and the happiest of memories.

THE EDITOR.

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